

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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{ From Beginning,
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Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

DRIED LAVENDER.

OH, the sweet dried lavender !
 Oh, the more than scent in it !
 The butterflies and bees astir,
 The pipe of linnets pent in it !
 Brick and smoke and mire have fled,
 Time and space between drop dead ;
 Oh, the sweet dried lavender !
 I can hear the pigeons whirr,
 I can count the quarters chiming,
 I can watch the ivy climbing,
 Close it clings from eave to basement,
 Clasps and shadows all the casement.
 Within, against the rafters wall,
 The oaken press stands black and tall ;
 I see its folded linen store
 Glean athwart its open door,
 I smell the lavender fresh-dried
 Strewing all the shelves inside.
 Unmade is yet your shroud, mother,
 Nor yet you are in heaven ;
 You count the sheets aloud, mother,
 And smooth and lay them even.
 Your jingling keys, with music low,
 Measure your steppings to and fro ;
 And, sorting, piling, still you croon
 Some soft, half-uttered cradle tune.
 Oh, the sweet dried lavender !
 I hear the wise old tabby purr
 Curled on the window-sill asleep,
 Where winter's sunlights start and creep.
 I hear, without, familiar babel
 Of turkeys and of geese,
 I, perched upon the kitchen table,
 In a smock above my knees ;
 My head is all a golden mop ;
 Upon my cheek the round tears drop ;
 The frosty morning weather nips
 My nose and toes and finger-tips.
 Mother, so quick you leave your sheets !
 The shelf of sugars and of sweets
 So well you rifle for my meal,
 Almond and fig and candied peel !
 You chafe my little palms, mother,
 You kiss away their cold,
 You take me in your arms, mother,
 And I am five years old.
 The Month. MAY PROBYN.

THE ROUNDEL.

A ROUNDEL is wrought as a ring or a star-
 bright sphere,
 With craft of delight and with cunning of
 sound unsought,
 That the heart of the hearer may smile if to
 pleasure his ear
 A roundel is wrought.

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of aught —
 Love, laughter, or mourning — remembrance of
 rapture or fear —
 That fancy may fashion to hang on the ear of
 thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and the
 hearts in us hear
 Pause answer to pause, and again the same
 strain caught,
 So moves the device whence, round as a pearl
 or tear,
 A roundel is wrought.

Athenæum.

ON A PAINTING BY ROSSETTI OF SNOW-
DROPS IN AN OUTLINED HAND.

PALE children of a wintry spring,
 Held in that shadowy, tapering hand,
 What corner of our English land,
 What garden saw your blossoming ?

Flowers fated but to bloom and die !
 Who changed for you the flowers' fate,
 And raised you from your low estate
 To changeless immortality ?

Mysterious, on the canvas red,
 The outline of a hand is seen,
 Clasping those tender shafts of green,
 Whence hangs each snowy drooping head.

All day, perchance, the painter wrought
 To fix your freshness in this place,
 His fancy by the careless grace
 Of flowers and slender fingers caught.

Then may your green-sheathed bells be found
 Growing above his quiet grave,
 Where distant murmurs of the wave
 Alone break on the rest around !
 Academy. I. O. L.

SONNET.

IN MEMORIAM W. C. P.

Drowned at Oxon, summer term 1882.

As at some revel, when the cups are crowned,
 And mirth and merriment are at their height,
 One feaster passes forth into the night
 Alone, on some far distant journey bound —
 Passes out silent without sign or sound,
 Fearful lest word of leave-taking should blight
 The feasting, and with darkness mar the light ;
 So, without word you passed, when all around
 Was sweet, and life was brightest and most gay ;
 When earth was fairest, and the sky most blue
 And like a sheet of silver. Isis shone,
 And we, bent on the pleasures of the day,
 Heeded you not, my brother, nor e'en knew
 That you were going, till we know you gone.

Chambers' Journal.

From The Edinburgh Review.

FREDERIC II. AND MARIA THERESA.*

THE Duke de Broglie has given us a book charming in itself, and most interesting from the new light which it throws on the most obscure transactions it describes. These volumes are history, not satire; but as the words and the deeds of Frederic are compared and contrasted in them with an exactness never before attained, we learn to separate the true from the false, and to distinguish the Frederic of fact from the Frederic of fiction. As a Frenchman, the Duke de Broglie has naturally no bias in favor of the Prussian king; but he is equally free from bias in favor of the French government. He examines and condemns, with equal rigor and severity, the mean, weak, short-sighted policy of Fleury and the hypocritical rapacity of Frederic. The story is a gloomy one; it is a record of folly, of wickedness, and of treachery, such as have seldom been equalled; it is worked out with close attention to accuracy in even minute details; and with a rare and poetic feeling, it gives an enthralling interest to what has sometimes been considered a dull, and what Frederic's admirers would fain believe a forgotten, episode. It has indeed all the elements of the tragic and the sublime: it tells of kings and queens, of wars and deaths, of heroic resolve and patriotic enthusiasm, of villany, perfidy, and crime.

The commencement of the story carries us back to the Pragmatic Sanction by which the emperor Charles VI., in default of male heirs, assigned his dominions to his daughter Maria Theresa. These dominions were widely scattered, and held by various claims; they had been added to the archduchy of Austria by happy marriages rather than by prosperous wars; they had never been consolidated or wedded into one; the different people, speaking different languages, had no feeling of national unity, and might easily fall apart if left without the strong hand of a master. To a young girl such an inheritance was likely enough to prove

a troublesome and even a dangerous one. It might perhaps have been secured if the emperor would have had her husband, the Duke of Lorraine, proclaimed King of the Romans; but this he would not do, keeping up even to the last—it has been supposed—a hope that he might still have a son. He preferred rather to trust to negotiation and to an agreement with France, whose consent was purchased with the long-coveted province of Lorraine; the duke receiving, as a nominal equivalent, the grand duchy of Tuscany. The Diet of the Empire had approved the Pragmatic Sanction, and all the powers of Europe had guaranteed it. That sturdy old warrior, Prince Eugene, had, indeed, urged the emperor to trust the cause of his daughter to a powerful army rather than to promises or vows; one hundred thousand men, he had said, would be more to the purpose than one hundred thousand guarantees. Of this Charles was sufficiently sensible; but the exhausted state of his treasury and the jealousy of his ministers rendered it impossible for him to act as Eugene and his own judgment advised, and the army was reduced instead of increased. Still the guarantees, as far as they went, appeared to be genuine. If there was faith in man or in governments, the emperor might die happy; but he had no such faith, and his last days were disturbed by gloomy anticipations of the evil to come. Nor were these long in being realized. He died at the comparatively early age of fifty-five, on October 20, 1740; and before the breath was well out of his body, all the Continental subscribers to the guarantee were busy in the endeavor to subvert the Pragmatic Sanction, and to turn the death of the emperor to their own private advantage.

Charles Albert, elector of Bavaria, was the first to speak out. Whilst waiving any claims he might have from his wife, a daughter of the late emperor's predecessor and elder brother, he had already hinted at pretensions going back to Ferdinand I., to whose will he appealed. A public reference to this will showed that the claim was invalid; but, notwithstanding this, he now reasserted it with

* *Frédéric II. et Marie-Thérèse, d'après des documents nouveaux.* 1740-1742. Par le Duc DE BROGLIE. 2 vols., 8vo. Paris: 1883.

significant persistence. Others were not slow to follow his example. Augustus, elector of Saxony and king of Poland, had married an elder sister of the electress of Bavaria, and, by virtue thereof, his claim was stronger than that of Charles Albert. The duke of Savoy and the king of Spain had their own pretensions, and would not be ignored. Each might claim the whole of the inheritance which, but a few years before, they had guaranteed to Maria Theresa, but a common interest prompted them to moderation, and suggested that they should divide the spoil. The threatened coalition was most formidable, for the Austrian army had little real existence, the Austrian treasury was empty, and the Austrian people themselves were disaffected — in the country, by reason of a bad harvest and consequent scarcity; in Vienna, by an unwillingness that the glory and profit of being the Imperial city should depart from among them. But neither were the opposing powers ready for immediate action, and the question whether they would be able to give effect to their claims seemed to depend very much on the view which France should take of the position.

France, equally with the other powers, had guaranteed the succession of Maria Theresa; and though she no doubt had certain remote genealogical claims, she had not put them forward. There was, apparently, nothing to tempt her to forfeit her pledge. But through more than two centuries she had been accustomed to consider herself as the natural enemy of the house of Austria, and the present seemed to some of her ruling spirits to be an opportunity for trampling the enemy in the dust. Cardinal Fleury still held the reins of government, as he had done for seventeen years before. He himself was virtually the French guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, and all that he was now called on to do was to acknowledge his plighted word. But he was a very old man, and old age is unwilling to take any decided step. Yet on January 26, only nine months before the emperor's death, he had written to him: —

Your Majesty may be assured that the king will observe, with the most exact and invio-

lable fidelity, the engagements which he has made with you; and if I may be allowed to speak of myself at the same time, I venture to hope that my peaceful intentions are so well known that you may readily believe I am very far from thinking of setting Europe in a flame.

And more to the same effect. In October, however, when it was time to make good his promises, he was wanting in both courage and decision. He hesitated, he equivocated. He told the Austrian minister that to doubt his good faith was an insult, but that under the unusual circumstances it was necessary to discuss the question of etiquette, and to determine how an Austrian sovereign, not holding the Imperial dignity, and a woman, was to be addressed; on the following day he assured the Bavarian minister that there was no reason why the elector should not aspire to the Imperial crown; that the king was free to support him; that the guarantee could not be understood as nullifying the just rights of any third party; and that the Bavarian claims should be considered. Thus paltering with his own conscience and the demands of the rivals, he became in the end the slave instead of the ruler of events.

Of all the Continental powers, Prussia alone had neither genealogical nor matrimonial claim on the Austrian succession, and had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction without difficulty or diplomacy. Her king, too, was a young man of — it was said — romantic, nay, of chivalrous disposition, and bound to the house of Austria by the ties of friendship and gratitude. It is unnecessary here to repeat the oft-told story of Frederic's education, and of the brutal treatment he received at the hands of his father. Suffice it to recall one incident of his youth. In August, 1730, the crown prince, then eighteen years old, unable longer to endure the tyranny to which he was subjected, resolved to fly and seek refuge, possibly, in England with his uncle. The attempt was frustrated. Of two friends who were to fly with him, one made good his escape; the other was apprehended, tried, and sentenced to imprisonment. The king considered this unequal to the crime, which he called high treason, and substi-

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tuted for the sentence an edict ordering the offender to be beheaded, which order was duly obeyed. Prince Frederic, under the name of Colonel Fritz, was also brought before a court-martial, on a charge of desertion; and at the special instance of the king, enforced on the members of the court by the royal cane unflinchingly laid on, he was found guilty, and sentenced to death. The princess Wilhelmina ventured to plead in her brother's behalf. With the foulest language the king threw himself on her, pommelled her over the face and head with his clenched fist, struck her to the ground by a blow on the temple, and was with difficulty restrained from kicking and trampling on her prostrate body. It was known that the sentence of the court had been procured by the brutal violence of the king: the courtiers, having more regard for their own shoulders and ears than for the life of a boy, scarcely ventured to intercede: the foreign ministers were lukewarm; and the prince was rescued from an otherwise certain fate only by the remonstrances of the Imperial ambassador, supported by a personal letter to the king from the emperor himself. He was pardoned, but permitted to remain in seclusion, destitute of the means to provide the necessities of life, still less the decencies of his rank. From this embarrassment, also, he was relieved by the emperor, who, for several years, secretly but regularly paid him such sums of money as rendered him independent of his father's sordid economy.

It is very well known that, during this time and for the greater part of the next ten years, the prince specially affected the society of musicians, philosophers, poets, and men of letters, professing the desire to rank as one of themselves; and that with such apparent zeal and earnestness, that there were many who believed that, when called to the throne, his chief merit and distinction would be as their patron, although there were not wanting those who suspected the sardonic humor, the seething ambition, and the unscrupulous rapacity which lay hid behind the mask of dissimulation, or who recognized the falseness of the assumed character

even when they were unable to form any clear idea of what the reality might prove. The old king died on May 31, 1740; and Frederic so far gave the lie to expectation, that he did not at once unveil. The dissimulation which had been forced on him in boyhood and youth was become a second nature; he kept up and increased the army which his father had formed, but he also kept up the literary coterie which he had assembled round himself; and during the first months of his reign appeared equally anxious about the set of a soldier's belt or the rhythm of a French sentence.

His romantic visit to Strasbourg, a few months later, did not make things clearer. His intention may possibly have been to go on to Paris, and, under the obscure name of Count Dufour, see for himself the society of which he had read and heard. This, however, must be doubtful, and the escapade probably meant nothing more than the curiosity of a young man suddenly released from severe restraint; otherwise, we may suppose that he would have provided himself beforehand with proper passports and letters of introduction, and that matters would have been arranged with more care to prevent recognition. As it was, he had not been many hours in Strasbourg before it was pretty generally known that Count Dufour was but another way of saying king of Prussia; and the Duke de Broglie suspects that his ancestor, the second Marshal de Broglie — who was then governor of the town, and to whose private papers he refers — may have been wanting in tact during the difficult interview which he had with the stranger.

Naturally [he says] if the old governor was guilty of any awkwardness, he was either not conscious of it or he took care not to acknowledge it; so that it remains difficult to understand what it was that provoked the king's ill-humor to such a degree that when, a year afterwards, the marshal had to concert measures with him relative to the operations of the campaign, the recollection of this incident proved a real difficulty.

We may, however, be permitted to doubt whether Frederic's distaste for the marshal really sprang from so childish a

cause, or whether it was not rather a recollection of the ridiculous figure which the old man had made during the recent campaign in Italy, when he had to spring into his saddle, without boots or breeches, and ride for his life from the ill-mannered Germans; and, if there is any truth in Frederic's story that the marshal entertained him with a long account of his name, his titles, and his distinctions, the king may well have thought him verging on his dotage.

It was a few days after this that, at Moyland, near Cleves, the young king met Voltaire for the first time. The conversation, which lasted well into the night, turned on philosophy, on the immortality of the soul, and incidentally on politics; and so led to Frederic's asking Voltaire to write for him a manifesto to the Bishop of Liège, against whom he had a disputed claim, which it had been proposed to compromise for a million livres, and which he had determined to enforce in spite of, or perhaps even in consequence of, the emperor's remonstrance. He had, in fact, written, very shortly after his accession, "I will presently go into the Cleves country and try what is to be done by gentle means; but if I meet with refusal I will do myself justice. The emperor is the old phantom of an idol which really had power long ago but has none now; just as he himself used to be a strong man, but is now worn by sickness and good for nothing." The peace of the Empire was not, however, disturbed; for, convinced by the arguments of Voltaire, or by the soldiers of Frederic, the bishop paid the sum. But the very summary proceeding which had been threatened gave rise to much uneasiness in diplomatic circles; and as the king, with an army already numbering some eighty thousand men in the highest state of efficiency, was busily increasing it, the question could not but be asked as to the probable motive — for the succession to the duchies of Juliers and Berg, which Frederic openly claimed, seemed altogether too small a matter to require such a formidable armament.

The public had not long to wait for an answer. Frederic was lying at Rheinsberg, sick of an intermittent fever, when, on October 26, he received news of the emperor's death. Contrary to the orders of his physician, he at once swallowed a dose of *quinquina* and sent off to Berlin for Count Podewils, the secretary of state, and for Field-Marshal Schwerin. At the same time he wrote to Voltaire, "I think that next June gunpowder and soldiers

and trenches will be more talked about than actresses, ballets, and theatres." That this was a correct forecast of the political weather, not only for next June but for the next three-and-twenty years, is now a familiar fact of history; and it was easy enough to make it, as the prophet was himself the disturbing influence. But the exact measure in which he was so has been strangely misstated by Frederic's agents in the first place, and afterwards by those who, admiring his genius, have been wilfully blind to his crimes; and of all who have sinned in this way, none — we say it to our shame — has been more guilty than an English writer who has been held up to public reverence as a great moral teacher.

Enough has been said of the late Mr. Harrison Ainsworth having promoted ruffians, such as Dick Turpin or Jack Sheppard, to be heroes of romance: that was, we think, a moral mistake and a literary error; but at least Mr. Ainsworth did not dwell on the crimes of his heroes as the praiseworthy incidents of their career; and, forgetting these, it may be allowable to admire the daring of the ride to York or the ingenuity of the escape from Newgate. In the same way we might be permitted to admire, in Frederic of Prussia, the courage which bore up against defeat or the military skill which led to victory; but these are not the characteristics which Mr. Carlyle chose to embellish with extravagant laudation. We are not now reviewing Mr. Carlyle's "History of Frederic * the Great," and would willingly pass it by in silence; but it forces itself on our notice, and the author's great reputation gives it an importance to which, on its own merits, it is not entitled. As history, it is not to be trusted; and as morality, it is to be utterly condemned. During his long life Mr. Carlyle waged a vigorous and oftentimes a righteous war against shams, against calling things by their wrong names; but when we find him holding Frederic up as an object for us to admire, and singling out unabashed falsehood as veracity, unblushing impudence as candor, or selfishness and greed as manliness and straightforwardness, we are compelled by his own teaching to enter a protest against the misuse of words and the misstatement of facts.

The incident in his hero's career which

* Mr. Carlyle generally calls his hero Friedrich, which is neither English nor accurate: the king of Prussia signed himself *Fédéric* in French, and *Friderich* in German; if he had known English, he might possibly have devised a third spelling.

he has honored with his warmest approval is his conduct immediately after the emperor's death, leading up to the war in Silesia. He refers to the justice of Frederic's claims, not, indeed, to discuss them — for not even Mr. Carlyle could pretend to understand them — but by asserting Frederic's belief in them.

He speaks [he says] when business requires it, of "those known rights" of his, and with the air of a man who expects to be believed on his word; but it is cursorily and in the business way only; and there is not here or elsewhere the least pleading. A man, you would say, considerably indifferent to our belief on that head; his eye set on the practical merely. "Just Rights? What are rights, never so just, which you cannot make valid? The world is full of such. If you have rights and can assert them into facts, do it; that is worth doing!"

So, indeed, Frederic thought, without asking whether the rights were just or unjust, or, indeed, without mentioning the rights at all. That Mr. Carlyle, in his view of Frederic's conduct on this important occasion, was carried away by the hero-worship which had affected him, has always been sufficiently clear; but the extent of his error has perhaps never been put before the public in a connected form till now by the Duke de Broglie, who has used the MSS. of his own family and of the French archives to illustrate and interpret the valuable papers lately published at Vienna and Berlin,* to which we are happily able to add some further elucidations from the diplomatic correspondence in our own records.

While Frederic and his two ministers were arranging their plans at Rheinsberg, the diplomatic world at Berlin was speculating as to the course the king of Prussia meant to take; and one opinion was, that plans were being formed "to bring the Imperial crown into the house of Brandenburg;" but all that could be got out of the Prussian ministers, who had really no knowledge, was "*Gaudeant bene armati*." The great stir among the troops suggested that the object might be to sustain the Prussian claims on the succession of Juliers and Berg; though, as early as November 5, Mr. Guy Dickens wrote, "The ministers and generals here speak very much of late of some old pretensions of this house upon the principality of Jägerndorf in Silesia;" and on the 15th, "The general opinion is that his

Prussian majesty must have some designs upon Silesia." It was not, however, till the 29th that he could say: "The project of invading Silesia is now almost as good as avowed; several of the regiments ordered on this expedition are actually on their march, and we are told that if they meet with any opposition, this army shall be supported by another of thirty thousand men." But, as is well known, the truth was not declared till the very last moment. On December 6, Mr. Dickens described a long conversation which he had had with the king, who said plainly enough that it was not his intention to support the Pragmatic Sanction; he had not guaranteed it, and was not bound by any engagements which his father had made. When Dickens asked him what he was to write to his court, Frederic grew red in the face and said, "You cannot yet have any instructions to ask me that; you have no right to enquire into my designs." Afterwards, however, he affected to become more communicative, and said: "He was for the grand duke of Tuscany's being made emperor, but he could never consent to his being declared king of Bohemia, and that it was against the Pragmatic Sanction; for if the queen, his consort, happened to die without issue, the second archduchess would be deprived of what belongs to her by right." On which Mr. Dickens observes:—

The King of Prussia contradicts himself: in the beginning of my audience, he declared he would not support the Pragmatic Sanction, and now he seems to plead for it; from which I can infer nothing else than that he meant to take possession of Bohemia as well as Silesia, under pretence of keeping those countries for the second archduchess, in case her elder sister should die without children.

Eleven days later, on the 17th, Dickens wrote again that the king had hinted to him that England might find her own advantage on the side of Mecklenburg. "I have been told," he added, "by a person of good authority that he was sometime in suspense whether he should begin his conquests by the latter or the former" — Mecklenburg or Silesia; and that it might be expected, if he remained in possession of the one, he would afterwards form the same pretension on the other. There does not, however, seem to have been any mention of Mecklenburg; and we know now from the "*Politische Correspondenz*" that the question proposed by Frederic to his two counsellors, Podewils and Schwerin, was simply and almost in so many words, How best to take pos-

* Arneth, *Geschichte Maria Theresia's*, 1863, etc. *Politische Correspondenz Friedrichs des Grossen*, 1879, etc.

session of Silesia? and that on October 29, they reported on three different plans of operation: 1. To offer to uphold Austria, defend her territory against all claimants, and to employ all his credit to get the grand duke of Tuscany elected emperor; in return for which, and for yielding to Austria his rights to the succession of Juliers and Berg, he was to be put in possession of Silesia. 2. If Austria should reject this proposal, to ally himself with Saxony and Bavaria, to sustain their pretensions, to yield his rights as to Juliers and Berg to France in favor of Bavaria, and so to be put in possession of Silesia. And either one or other of these, but more especially the first, they recommended: but as a third alternative, in case of Saxony invading Bohemia or Silesia, they give — to enter the country and hold it by force, "a measure for which some sort of justification can surely be found;" having occupied the country, he will be in an advantageous position to treat for its cession.

Frederic was not long in making up his mind to adopt this third course, without waiting for the pretence of a Saxon invasion: his troops were concentrated in the direction of Silesia, whilst detailed preparations were made for a winter camp; but, as we have seen, not so secretly as to prevent suspicion, which was transmitted to Vienna by the Austrian minister at Berlin. The queen refused to credit it: the ingenuous confidence and honest illusions of youth had not yet been destroyed by the cruel experience of human wickedness or the withering selfishness of politics: she believed in virtue, in honor, in nobility of soul; and was unwilling to doubt either the mellifluous protestations of Fleury, or the gratitude of a prince whose life her father had saved. The Austrian ministers, who had not the plea of youth and innocence, said, "There's no cause for anxiety: he will be like his father, who went through life with his musket at full cock, without ever firing it off." One only, Bartenstein, to whom knowledge and suspicion had come with grey hairs, took a more gloomy view of the situation: "No one knows," he said, "what this young man really is; and I warned the late emperor of it when he insisted on writing to his father to save his life."

The court of Vienna, however, resolved to send the Marquis de Botta d'Adorno as a special ambassador to Berlin, and he arrived there on December 3. The military preparations which he saw on his

journey left little doubt in his mind, and the persistence with which Frederic avoided the subject was only an additional confirmation. He could obtain nothing more definite than that the king was sending Count Gotter on a special mission to Vienna. "I trust," he said, "that the queen will carefully consider his message: she will see that my proposals are reasonable and my intentions are pure." Botta was at once dissatisfied and alarmed; his feelings found expression in forcible language; but neither the general public nor the foreign ministers believed in the reality of his imprecations, or in his assertions that Austria would resist the invasion of her territory. The resistance, they said, would be a mere pretence, a farce; that Botta's mission was to arrange a close alliance with Frederic, who was to support the grand duke, and to receive some part of Silesia — even if it was thought better that he should appear to take it by force, so that it might not be said that Austria herself had given up the Pragmatic Sanction. The French ambassador, the Marquis de Valori, was much perturbed. "What does it all mean?" he wrote: "M. de Botta denies that there is any agreement between the grand duke and the king; he appears to be extremely indignant; if he is playing a comedy, he is doing it uncommonly well." On the evening of December 10 Frederic threw off the mask. He sent for Botta, and revealed his immediate purpose, as to which we may let the Duke de Broglie speak: —

This was nothing less than the formal demand for the cession of Silesia, imperiously signified to Maria Theresa at the very moment of taking forcible possession of it, without any declaration of war and even without any previous warning. This perfidious action burst like a shell over astonished Europe. All contemporary documents bear witness to the intense indignation which it aroused in all who placed any value in morality and honor. Time, success, and glory have since then produced their ordinary effect, and the echo of that outcry of the public conscience has been much weakened on its way down to posterity. And, in these last days, there have even been found, outside of Germany, serious historians — such as the celebrated Englishman, Carlyle — to undertake the justification of this violent outrage. We may now, however, say that the archivists of Berlin have revived the impression which was becoming effaced. The character of the enterprise was already known to be sufficiently odious; but by their new revelation they have taught us how much, from the very first, it was aggravated by the cunning and hypocrisy which presided over its secret

elaboration. . . . Why Frederic made choice of Silesia rather than any other part of Maria Theresa's patrimony is explained by the simple fact that this province, lying contiguous to his own States, was most open to a sudden and surreptitious attack. As to the rights which have been spoken of as sufficient to justify him, I may, for several reasons, pass them by as undeserving of serious consideration; for, in the first place, this side of the question did not at any time occupy the attention of Frederic; and, in the second, if these rights ever existed, they had died out many years before. Droysen has attempted to show, by reference to numerous judicial and diplomatic writings, that some of the Duchies of Silesia formerly belonged to the Electors of Brandenburg, and were parted with by them only in exchange for another principality which had been promised but never ceded. Such an argument is nothing to the purpose. The latest of these transactions, true or false, dates back to 1660,* since which time Austria and Prussia had been at peace for eighty years, had signed more than one treaty of alliance, and even in the last war had fought side by side. If it is permitted to revive claims so long forgotten, what prince, what private individual even, as Macaulay has well remarked, could sleep in security? But, independently of that, let us be as candid as Frederic himself, and accept the avowal which he made to Voltaire, and which Voltaire alone prevented him from publishing. We must then admit that he had absolutely no right except that which he derived from having an army ready to act, and a treasury well filled, unless indeed we add, from the weakness and misfortune of Maria Theresa.

This last point in the Duke de Broglie's argument may be strengthened by the consideration that, on marching into Silesia, Frederic issued a manifesto to the inhabitants, in which the rights that have been since so much talked of are not only not mentioned, but are not even hinted at. He said that in the dangerous discussions which must be expected to follow on the death of the emperor without a male heir, and which may probably be pushed to great lengths by those who think they have claims on the inheritance, the province of Silesia seems to form a sort of barrier to the Prussian dominions, and therefore, he continued,

we have thought it our duty to take military possession of this province in order to stop the

advance of the fire of war which threatens our frontiers, and to shield ourselves from all danger on that side. Our purpose in taking this step is to prevent all ill consequences, and to preserve our subjects and States from the baneful effects of a general war, in accordance with the universally accepted principles of the right of nations, which authorize a just defence. . . . In doing this we have no design to do any injury to her Majesty the Queen of Hungary, between whose house and our own a very close union has always existed.

And more to the same purpose, but not a word as to any rights or claims on the province. The Prussian soldiers crossed the frontier on December 16; but this manifesto, then issued, is dated December 1, and was published in French—presumably for the benefit of Europe at large—in the semi-official *Journal de Berlin Politique* of December 31. Not till three weeks later (January 21, 1741) did the same journal give, in French, an abstract of the claim which, it says, "was printed here a few days ago;" and subsequent to this appeared an official pamphlet, in French,* stating the claims in full detail. But we know now by the direct evidence of the Prussian archives,† that the question of right had absolutely no weight with Frederic in planning the aggression: "That," he wrote to Podelwils, who had prickings of conscience, and reminded him that there were solemn treaties in the way, "that is the business of the ministers, and yours more especially: it's time you were getting on with it, but secretly, for the orders to the troops are given." The ministers had presumably not accomplished their crooked task when the invasion took place, so that their statement was not published for more than a month afterwards, when it was deemed advisable to endeavor, if possible, to tone down the scandal arising out of an operation which the Duke de Broglie curtly describes as of a kind more familiar to brigands than to diplomats.

We are here able to give but a faint reflection of the argument and the evidence with which, through many pages, the Duke de Broglie lays bare the astounding falsehood and hypocrisy of the king of Prussia. Scarcely a word is recorded, whether spoken by himself at home or his ministers abroad, which does not tell with damning effect on the character of

* In refusing to entertain the argument at all, the Duke de Broglie has, we may presume intentionally, understated his case. For, briefly, most stress has been laid on the claim to the duchy of Jägerndorf, whose duke, at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, was a collateral relation of the House of Brandenburg. In the early years of the war this prince was driven out by the emperor; the duchy was then held to have reverted to Bohemia; but, if the term confiscation is preferred, the confiscation took place about the year 1622, and was recognized by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

* Exposition fâdles des droits incontestables de la Maison Royale de Prusse et Electorale de Brandebourg sur plusieurs principautés, duchés et seigneuries de la Silésie, 470, 92 pp.

† Politische Correspondenz, No. 141, vol. i., p. 91.

this man, of whom Mr. Carlyle did not scruple to say: "In his way he is a Reality, he always means what he speaks, grounds his actions on what he recognizes for the truth, and, in short, has nothing whatever of the hypocrite . . . a king who managed not to be a liar." But indeed Mr. Carlyle's own judgment on his hero, read by the clear light of the "*Politische Correspondenz*," is more severe than anything which the Duke de Broglie has written.

He knew well [he says] how entirely inexorable is the nature of facts; how vain all cunning of diplomacy, management, and sophistry to save any mortal, who does not stand on the truth of things, from sinking in the long run. Sinking to the very Mudgods, with all his diplomacies, possessions, achievements, and becoming an unnameable object, hidden deep in the Cesspools of the Universe.

Notwithstanding his determination, rights or no rights, to invade Silesia, Frederic was anxious to find support amongst the powers of Europe. He vainly endeavored to cajole Mr. Dickens, who earnestly implored him to consider "the great reproach he would bring upon himself by such an open breach of his engagements, which he would never be able to color with any pretence founded on the least shadow of reason or justice;" after hearing which, he turned to M. de Valori, and asked him if it was not the wish and the interest of France to take the Imperial crown away from the house of Austria and give it to the elector of Bavaria; and if so, whether the king would not be glad to have his alliance. Valori replied doubtfully, that public rumor alleged that he had already engaged himself to the grand duke.

He answered me [wrote Valori on December 13] that it was far from being so. His vote was still for hire: but that if he did not find an opportunity of allying himself with the king, he would look for other friends who would support his views. That for himself he was perfectly indifferent as to who should be emperor, and that in the election he should be guided by his own interests or those of his allies. But he would repeat that his friendship was not to be despised, for he was in a position to second any aims the king might have, whilst his aggrandisement could not be prejudicial to France.

This interview may be considered as the first definite approach of Prussia to France, and the beginning of that negotiation which, a few months later, ended in an alliance between the two countries. In dealing with it, therefore, the Duke de Broglie passes in review the several

courses open to France to follow. She might have frankly anticipated the demand of the queen, and hastened to acknowledge and confirm the engagements into which she had entered by the treaty of 1738. This would have been chivalrous, but also, it may be admitted, unusual, and was not obligatory. A second course would have been to have waited until called on; and when the queen invoked the aid of her allies, it would not have been altogether out of place, before undertaking the expense of a campaign, to stipulate for some compensation. This might have taken the form of part of the Austrian Netherlands, or of Luxemburg, which—as after events proved—Maria Theresa would gladly have given up, sooner than yield to the insolent aggression of Frederic, and which, at the same time, would have rounded off and markedly strengthened the French border.

France [he says] had thus the choice between an act of almost ideal disinterestedness, and a fairly honorable, well-calculated policy. There was one other line of conduct possible—to break all her engagements without either provocation or pretext, and to throw herself blindly into the chances of a continental aggression on the very eve of a maritime war; and all for the sake of a Pretender without troops, such as the Elector of Bavaria, and in company of an ally without faith, such as the invader of Silesia. This had the curious merit of combining all that was wrong with all that was dangerous, and imprudence with disloyalty; and it was it which, after mature reflection, the French Government chose to adopt.

The consideration which determined this course was mainly that of the hostility which, since the days of Francis I. and Charles V., had been traditional between the houses of France and Austria. To all Frenchmen the glory and greatness of Richelieu or of Mazarin, of Condé, Turenne, and Villars, were based on the blows which they had struck against the Imperial house. From the general to the subaltern, from the ambassador to the lowest diplomatic agent, the whole service of the crown had been trained from earliest youth to a policy hostile to Austria; and would have felt that their king was resisting the decrees of Providence and insulting the memory of his ancestors, if he neglected this chance to overwhelm the enemy of centuries. But, as a matter of fact, the traditional policy of France had, for the time being at least, lost its old meaning. When that policy was initiated, the Empire of Charles

V. embraced what was practically the whole of continental Europe, except France. But in the course of years it had been disintegrated: limb after limb had been lopped from it by long wars or dynastic changes. With Spain, with southern Italy, with Holland, with Alsace and Lorraine lost to it; with Hanover linked to England; with an armed and autocratic Prussia risen in the north, and with Russia coming each year into more prominent notice, and showing more distinctly a desire and intention to be reckoned as one of the great powers of Europe, the dignity of the emperor was but the shadow of what it had been, and the aggressive force of the Empire had ceased to be a danger; with the accession of Maria Theresa it might be considered to have vanished altogether. A true statesman, had such a man been at the head of the French ministry, might well have thought the time come to modify the old ideas, and have considered whether the danger to France was not greater from a young and aggressive Prussia than from an old and conservative Austria. But Fleury, in his eighty-eighth year, wished for nothing more than peace—peace abroad if he could have it, but in any case peace at home—and the martial ardor of the enthusiastic spirits who surrounded the court, and the ambition of the unchaste sisterhood who surrounded the king, carried him away on the flood of military enterprise. He would fain have resisted; but resistance had become impossible. Why should this old priest, it was everywhere asked, stop the course of glory and honor which opened to the king and to France? His senile rule, it was said, had already lasted too long. If his old age was deaf to the voice of events, means must be taken to make him hear. One cardinal had struck a mortal blow at Austria: this other cardinal would revive her, if he was permitted. Let him go. The king could easily find a successor: a man of action as well as of counsel; at once a general and a minister.

One name was in the mouths of all the agitators, that of Charles Louis Fouquet, Comte de Belle-Isle. This was the grandson of Fouquet the financier: he was now fifty-six years old; but the cloud which had darkened the fortunes of his family and kept him from the court in his youth, had sheltered him from the bad effects of fashion and notoriety, and preserved him from the stamp of uniformity which was impressed on the great body of the French nobles. Instead of step-

ping at once into an assured and recognized position, he had his way to make both in the army and at court, where, indeed, he was not received at all till after the death of Louis XIV. He had thus served in the army as a soldier rather than as a volunteer, and had won each grade by merit and brilliant conduct before the enemy. At court he obtained influence by the seductive and caressing grace of his manner, which rendered him irresistible amongst the fair rulers of society. Meanwhile he was indefatigable in his endeavors to establish himself on the firm base of property: he had persuaded the regency that his sole patrimony, the rocky island from which he derived his title, was a necessary safeguard to the coasts of Brittany, and had ceded it to the State on advantageous terms: he had engaged, also, in certain army contracts, of a more or less doubtful character, but leading to very profitable results; and thus, at the present time, he was possessed of great wealth, a man of talent and originality, a marshal of France and a universal favorite.

He had been quick to note the opportunity of breaking down the power of Austria; and for some years before the death of Charles VI., had maintained a close correspondence with the elector of Bavaria, with whom, through his wife, he was distantly connected. When, therefore, the time came, Belle-Isle was at once the strongest advocate of the Bavarian claims, and the choice of the war party in France. Fleury would willingly have compromised matters, and have acknowledged Maria Theresa as queen of Hungary and Bohemia, whilst he supported Charles Albert as a candidate for the Imperial crown; and, at the same time, have engaged both to keep the peace of Europe. But this was not the view of those around him; and Belle-Isle on the one hand, the king of Prussia on the other, had very different plans. Whether a frank and loyal recognition of Maria Theresa, in accordance with the guarantee, would have altogether stayed the hand of Prussia, may be perhaps doubtful: but it is certain that Frederic calculated on the support of either England or France, trusting that their impending hostility would compel them to take opposite sides.

We find nothing in the despatches between the English government and the English ambassadors at Vienna or Berlin which leads us to suppose that—in the beginning, at any rate—England

would have supported Frederic in his scheme of spoliation, though she would very probably not have made common cause with Austria and France against him. But Frederic very early understood that there was no probability of active opposition from France, and he depended on the helplessness of Hanover as a means of neutralizing any measures which England might threaten. When, however, he saw that France was anxious for Charles Albert to be elected emperor, the way was open for further intrigue. He signified to the cardinal that his vote, as elector of Brandenburg, was for hire; and the cardinal, pondering over the proposal, noted: "The king retains it, and, as an earnest, invites him to make a treaty of alliance." He had said, "It's absurd to suppose that this can be settled without swords clashing:" "Difficult, I allow," mused the cardinal. "It is right for the young people to begin the dance," continued Frederic. "Yes," wrote Fleury, "that is true; but as the ball is chiefly on their account, we must take care that when they have had enough of it, they do not leave others to finish, and endure the reproaches of those who have to pay the piper." This curious conversation appears as a sketch for the instruction of M. de Valori, and took form in an official letter of January 5.

His Majesty [it runs] very sincerely desires, for the sake of the prince's interest, that his enterprise may succeed; and, for the sake of his reputation, that he should not delay justifying himself. Courts more suspicious than ours might hesitate to avow this . . . for the sending an ambassador of such high rank as Count Gotter to Vienna seems to indicate a double negotiation. It is publicly stated here that Count Gotter has offered to the Grand Duke to enter into all his views, without exception, if he would but agree to recognize the king's rights in Silesia. But his Majesty puts no faith in these reports; he has perfect confidence in the King of Prussia, and gives a very decided proof of it in thus offering, at the present time, to ally himself with him.

This was accompanied by a project of alliance, according to the terms of which the two sovereigns engaged themselves to act in unison, in order to place on the Imperial throne that prince who should be considered best fitted to maintain the liberties of the Empire: following on which, his Very Christian Majesty would offer no opposition to the king of Prussia exercising his rights on Silesia; whilst on his part, the king would put no obstacle in the way of the house of Bavaria satis-

fying such claims as it had on the Austrian States. As yet, nothing was said about armed support: it was merely implied. For the present, the moral support was enough: it was, indeed, a great deal; for it gave an air of respectability to an adventure which justly lay under the ban of European diplomacy.

The intrusion of France into the domestic politics of Germany was certain to be resented by many of the German States, and still more by England, which, already at war with Spain, felt the attitude of France in relation to that power as offensive and hostile. The sending a large French fleet to the West Indies had given rise to speculations as to the orders under which it had sailed; and though it was not yet known that, in the early days of January, a casual encounter had taken place, whether by "mistake" or "anticipation," it was well enough known that the fleet had gone out to lend moral, and not improbably physical, support to the Spaniards. The answer which England might make to the unfriendly if not hostile demonstration was eagerly looked for. What England wished to do, what seemed to English politicians as a European interest, was to form a general coalition of German States against France; and, as the first step towards this, to patch up a peace between Prussia and Austria. To induce the one to offer terms which the other would accept, became the leading idea of the embassies at Berlin and Vienna: at this latter place especially, the English minister was virtually an agent for Frederic, working to obtain the concessions which he demanded; whilst at Berlin the king was courted by both France and England, on account of the very act of aggression which outraged the whole of Europe. From Versailles he received hints of a possible military assistance to finish his conquest, which London labored to secure for him as the price of peace. It was with this knowledge that, on January 30, he wrote to his uncle George II.: —

I am happy to see that I have not been deceived in the trust which I have placed in your Majesty. . . . Having had no allies, I have not been able to open myself to any one; but, seeing your Majesty's good intentions, I look on you as being already my ally, and think that, for the future, I ought not to have anything hidden or secret from you. . . . Very far from wishing to trouble the peace of Europe, I want nothing except the recognition of my just and incontestable rights. . . . I place unbounded reliance on the friendship of your Majesty, and on the common interests of

Protestant princes, which imperatively urge us to maintain the cause of those who are oppressed for their religion. The tyranny of the Government under which the Silesians have groaned is frightful, and the barbarity of the Catholics towards them is inexpressible. If these Protestants lose me, they have no longer any resource. If your Majesty wishes to secure for yourself an ally whose fidelity and firmness are inviolable, this is the time: our interests, our religion, our blood is the same; and it would be lamentable to see us opposed to each other: still more so would it be if I should be obliged to concur in the ambitious designs of France—which I have no intention of doing unless I am forced to it.

It is, however, certain, that notwithstanding the very close and friendly negotiations which Frederic was carrying on with France, he would have preferred the alliance of England, not so much for his own sake, as because the popular feeling of Prussia was in favor of it. He thus wavered between the two in a perplexing manner, writing to Podewils such notes as, "The course we have to take is to agree with France, and arrange matters with her, for England will never consent to help us;" or again, "Do all you can to keep France amused, till we see if we cannot gain our end by means of mediation." Mr. Robinson was, in fact, hard at work trying to persuade the court of Vienna to accept the proposal of Count Gotter to lend two million thalers (300,000*l.*), as a pledge for which a part of Silesia was to remain in the hands of Prussia, with the understanding that neither money nor pledge was to be returned; in this way, it was argued, the principle of the Pragmatic Sanction would be maintained; a precedent for dividing the heritage of Charles VI. would not be established.

Whilst this negotiation was going on at Vienna, Frederic himself, at Berlin, was feeling his way with Valori, anxious to obtain some distinct promise from Fleury. But Fleury, with eighty-seven years at his back, was not disposed to commit himself with undue haste; he had sent a vague project of a defensive alliance; Frederic wanted something more definite. Will the king, he asked, guarantee me the possession of lower Silesia and Breslau? Valori, unable to say that he would, suggested that he ought to give the king some excuse for it, by a statement of his pretensions. "Oh," answered Frederic, "my titles are good, very good. If I have not yet made them clear, it is that, pending a reply from Vienna, I have reserved the best arguments for the last." On which Valori asked if those arguments

were not the thirty 24-pounders and the fifteen mortars which were ready to set out. Frederic laughed, and said that in fact they were very persuasive ones. At another time he said, with quite a burst of confidence, "Look here! let us give Bohemia to the elector of Bavaria. He's such a fine fellow, and so fond of the house of France. But now, tell me honestly what you think of the intentions of your government; doesn't it know that I am its natural ally in Germany?" And again when Valori had conveyed a wish, on the part of Belle-Isle, to have some definite understanding with the king before the meeting of the Diet, to which he was appointed ambassador, Frederic replied, "Let him come here by all means. Besides the pleasure I shall have in making his acquaintance, it will be truly delicious to see a French general with a Prussian army in the heart of Silesia." The continued mocking tone and ambiguous replies were too much for Valori, who had no turn for humor or raillery, especially when he was the object of it. Irritation quickened his apprehension, and he wrote to Belle-Isle on February 7, transmitting indeed the invitation, but adding:—

The King of Prussia is not dealing with us in a straightforward manner. My opinion is that we should take the other side, so as not to be the dupe of a prince who carries on negotiations everywhere, and thinks he is mighty clever in concluding none. . . . As I am speaking frankly, I do not hesitate to say that fickleness, presumption, and pride are the basis of this character.

Even if Belle-Isle or Fleury was convinced, it was too late for any such change of policy; and on February 22, Valori was instructed to give the king of Prussia all that he asked for; a promise to support the elector of Bavaria, or a guarantee of lower Silesia, taking in exchange the already offered renunciation of his claims on Juliers and Berg. He was, however, specially ordered not to leave any written evidence in the hands of a prince who might, without uncharitableness, be supposed capable of making a bad use of it. The negotiations between France and Prussia were in this advanced state when Austria positively and disdainfully refused the terms which had been proposed by Gotter and supported by Robinson. The grand duke had indeed inclined towards accepting them; but the queen would hear of nothing but the withdrawal of the Prussian troops from Silesia. She was reported to have said that she was willing

to forget, if the king of Prussia would ask her pardon; and Bartenstein — who had always been bitterly opposed to the English and strongly in favor of the French alliance — whom Robinson described as "French mad" — laid it down as a first principle that the "attempt to rectify the king without ruffling him was as much lost trouble as washing a Moor white."

Undoubtedly, at this time, the queen of Hungary and a powerful section of her ministers still entertained a firm confidence in the support of France. The undecided manner of Fleury was thus doubly fatal; had he spoken out at once, and pledged himself and France to maintain the Pragmatic Sanction, it is at least possible that Frederic might not have acted the part he did; or had he openly declared his intention of upholding the elector of Bavaria, the queen would have seen the necessity of buying off Frederic. As it was, Prussia and Austria were both encouraged; and the war which might never have occurred, or have been limited to the invasion of Silesia, was spread over all Europe, and indeed over all the known world. When too late, the letters from France gradually undeceived the Cabinet of Maria Theresa. "The king," Fleury wrote, "is faithful to his promises; but how can he sacrifice the rights of another?" The queen claimed the support of France as a right, a thing which she and her husband had bought and paid for by the cession of Lorraine. "It is easy to believe," replied the cardinal, "that your dear husband felt some regret at parting with the heritage of his fathers; but in any case, he is amply recompensed for it by the happiness of possessing your Majesty."

By the time this was written, the war in Silesia had fairly begun, and the position of the Prussian army was critical. In front, the Austrians were advancing in force; in rear, the peasantry had formed armed bands which threatened the communications, and cut the throats of all stragglers; whilst on the flanks, the attitude of Saxony or of Poland was unsatisfactory, and might any day become dangerous. "Pandora's box is opened," said Podewils; "all the ills of life are coming out of it at once."

Frederic manfully bore up against the difficulties which crowded on him; but they acted as a sensible stimulus to the negotiations with France. "The king," he said to Valori on March 11, "can count on having in me a grateful ally. . . . "As soon as I understand his intentions

in favor of the elector of Bavaria, it is only necessary to mark on the map with a pencil what he is to have. I will almost answer with my head that he shall have it." But at the same time he insisted on the alliance being kept secret. Valori agreed, and offered to quit the camp with the sullen air of a man discontented with his want of success. "Do so," cried Frederic, delighted; "do so, and take care that Brackel (the Russian minister) knows of it."

For the fact was that though the French alliance brought with it an immense accession of material and political strength, it was, in some respects, a source of moral weakness. It might suit the governments of the different German States, at enmity with each other, to cultivate friendly relations with the government of France; but by the great German people, Prussians, or Bavarians, or Austrians, the French were utterly detested. Wherever the German tongue was spoken the sanguinary excesses in the Palatinate were held in bitter memory; and every one who had been to Paris had some tale to tell of insult and contumely. The two causes worked towards the same result; and the one sentiment held in common by all Germans, of whatever State they were, was intense hatred of the French. The king of Prussia, who was, individually, quite above these vulgar feelings, and had his likes and dislikes, his loves and his hates, under the perfect control of political expedience, was nevertheless well aware of the wide-spread existence of this antipathy, and specially warned Valori that, in the minds of several of the German princes, the support of France would do the elector of Bavaria more harm than good.

Having started a candidate, however, France was determined that he should win; and pending the meeting of the Diet, the Comte de Belle-Isle was instructed to push the canvass in all possible quarters. He entered on this office in the middle of March, and addressed himself, in the first instance, to the three electoral bishops of Trèves, Cologne, and Mayence. These had each their own opposing interests; but by intrigue, judicious flattery, and unscrupulous bribery, they were brought to make common cause against the house of Austria. The beginning was of good omen, and Belle-Isle passed on to Dresden.

Frederic Augustus II., elector of Saxony and king of Poland, was the one legitimate son of Frederic Augustus I.,

commonly distinguished as the Strong, whom the Duke de Broglie happily describes as "Lutheran by birth, Catholic by ambition, and Mussulman by morals; beginning life as a hero of romance, and ending it as a pasha in his seraglio." Neither in his virtues nor his vices did his son resemble him: a weak, amiable prince, and a constant, perhaps rather a submissive husband, his principal care was to ensure his peace in this world and his salvation in the next; and, to do this with as little trouble as possible, he had handed over the care of his kingdom to Count Brühl, a German Protestant, and the care of his soul to Father Guarini, an Italian Catholic. His wife, Maria Josepha, elder sister of the electress of Bavaria, was first cousin of Maria Theresa, and might very well be considered to have, genealogically, a better title to the inheritance. He had at first been inclined to assert this claim; but indolence, and possibly some unusual sense of the meaning of an oath, had restrained him. What he would not do for himself he was not likely to do for the elector of Bavaria, or his wife's younger sister; and his minister, Brühl, was horrified at the territorial aggrandizement of the king of Prussia; whilst his confessor, Guarini, was equally averse to the displacement of the true religion by this aggressive Protestant.

All the influences which bore on Augustus were thus in favor of Maria Theresa, as opposed to the ambition of Bavaria, Prussia, and France; with, indeed, one notable exception, which proved sufficient to turn his unstable character. This was the persuasion of his illegitimate brother Maurice, Count de Saxe, whom Mr. Carlyle delighted to present to his readers as the eldest of the three hundred and fifty-four royal bastards; a Saxon by birth, but French by habit and profession, and a general in the French army; a man of superb physique and splendid intellect; and even when shattered in health by long-continued excesses, still the rival, if not the superior, in military fame of the king of Prussia himself. Count de Saxe had no particular disposition in favor of Frederic; but his interest was essentially French, and his influence with his brother was thrown altogether into the scale in support of Belle-Isle's mission. Just as Belle-Isle arrived at Dresden, came the news of the battle of Mollwitz. Nothing, it is said, succeeds like success, and the elector of Saxony, already urged by his brother Maurice, was not disinclined to join the alliance, to give his vote to the

elector of Bavaria, and to help in the spoliation of the unfortunate queen of Hungary. He was, however, too sluggish to move easily or quickly; and whilst he was making up his mind, Belle-Isle went on to Breslau to arrange matters in a personal interview with Valori, who had, from the first, been suspicious of Frederic's honesty, and now found his aims considerably extended by the victory at Mollwitz. He insisted on additional guarantees, and reasserted his claims on the succession of Juliers and Berg, which he had already waived in favor of France.

Valori's suspicions were not uncalled for. Two days after the battle the king had written to Podewils saying that, through the ambassador in London, he had accepted the proposition of the king of England as to the form of agreement with Austria. "Perhaps the signal victory gained the day before yesterday will give weight to this negotiation. As regards that with France, let it lag — only, not as if you meant it; and cajole Valori more than ever."* And the following day, "You know my intentions, and how important it is to protract the business, and to keep France skilfully in play until the arrival of Lord Hyndford. Meanwhile, continue to negotiate secretly with England and Russia, so that we may be able, according to circumstances, to take the side which suits us best." Ten days later, April 23, he wrote: —

You will compliment M. de Belle-Isle, in my name, on his safe journey, and speak of the great desire I have to see him; but you must detain him at Breslau for two or three days longer. You may say that the roads are not safe, and that he must have an escort, which I will no doubt provide. Only you must be cautious that he does not suspect anything. When he comes on here, do you come too; you will cajole him admirably.

And the next day he added: —

From the way in which you tell me the Marshal de Belle-Isle has acted at Cologne, at Mayence, and at Trèves, I conclude that he is imperious and absolute in his opinions. He will want to settle matters at once; whilst I, for my part, want to wait the arrival of the English charlatan before I decide. So, in any case, by flattering the Belle-Isle to the uttermost, and displaying the greatest possible desire to conclude the treaty, we must manage to defer doing it until we have seen how things go with the English.

It was not till the 26th that Belle-Isle

* "*En cajolant le de Valori*," is a frequent recommendation, which sometimes appears as "*Sol: ihn cajoliren*."

was allowed to come on to the camp, still near Mollwitz; and even then, although he travelled with a gallant escort, and was received with military honors by the king himself, great care was taken to prevent his speaking about the treaty. Frederic took his guest through the camp, passed the army in review before him, explained everything, talked incessantly, but would not let Belle-Isle slip in a word. Not till the evening did he get an opportunity, when he strongly urged the necessity of signing the treaty without delay. Frederic listened complacently; thanked him; assured him that it was his fixed purpose to ally himself with the king; that he was deeply sensible of the friendship which his Majesty had shown him when all the rest of the world was turning its back; that never, no, never in all his life, would he forget it, and said that, as it was getting late, he would say nothing more just then, but the next day, after dinner, would open his heart to him. This was a further delay of twenty-four hours, and the opening of his heart, when it came, was the enumeration of a list of grievances, which amounted to a complaint that France had promised much both for Bavaria and Prussia, but had done nothing. To which Belle-Isle replied that this related to the negotiation, but had no further value after he had given his word to Valori; that the word of a great prince ought to be as inviolable as a signed treaty; that the queen of Hungary would prefer ceding all Bohemia to the elector of Bavaria to yielding one village to him; and much more to the same purport; on which Frederic moderated his tone, and said that of course the agreement was to hold, but the treaty must not be signed yet, as the knowledge of it would raise a terrible storm on the part of England and Russia. A few days later, when Lord Hyndford, the new English ambassador, had arrived, Frederic convinced himself that England would by no means guarantee what France had agreed to, the whole of lower Silesia. Hyndford proposed, as a compromise, one or two duchies, instead of the four which Frederic demanded; and the conviction that nothing more was to be got out of the English brought him to conclude matters with the French, and the treaty was finally signed on June 5.

In preparing, as in signing the treaty, the most absolute secrecy was observed; Podewils writing it with his own hand, so that not even the clerks in his office — one of whom was in Hyndford's pay —

knew anything about it. By accident rather than design, the secrecy has been partially preserved ever since; and though the substance of it has been published often enough,* the full text is now printed for the first time, and permits no longer any doubt as to the iniquitous compact by which France solemnly engaged herself "to guarantee, with all her force and against all comers, the whole of lower Silesia to the king of Prussia and his heirs forever;" and also "to put the elector of Bavaria in a condition to act vigorously, by furnishing him with all the necessary means, and sending as many troops to his assistance as shall be requisite." About all this there was, in reality, no doubt before, though the course of after events rendered it politic for those who rated Frederic as a hero to assume that the treaty was, in point of fact, not a treaty at all, but only a vague agreement, "a kind of provisional off-and-on treaty," says Mr. Carlyle, "which is thought to have had many ifs in it;" "a very fast and loose treaty, to all appearance;" "never was a more contingent treaty;" all which rests on no stouter support than a perverted imagination. "Both parties," he adds, "have their hands loose, and make use of their liberty for months to come; nay, in some sort, all along, feeling how contingent it was," which is true, indeed, of the king of Prussia, but certainly not of both parties. For in sober truth the treaty was as sound and solid as treaty could be, and was fairly acted on by France, though not without misgivings on the part of Fleury, who wrote to Belle-Isle on June 17, speaking, indeed, of the elector of Bavaria in most favorable terms, though lamenting that he was neither rich nor powerful, and expressing his uneasiness at entering on the war with no allies except some necessitous princes; and going on: —

The King of Prussia, who is not in this category, disquiets me more than any other. His mind is altogether ill-regulated; he listens to no advice, and resolves rashly, without having taken the measures necessary to ensure success. Good faith and sincerity are not his favorite virtues: he is false in everything, even in his caresses. I even doubt whether he is sure in his alliances, for he has no other principle than his own selfish interest. He wishes to govern and to arrange everything without reference to us. He is hated by the whole of Europe. The portrait may perhaps appear to

* Amongst others, in Flanagan, "Histoire de la Diplomatie française," v. 142; and in Ranke, "Neun Bücher preussischer Geschichte," ii. 274.

you somewhat exaggerated; and as you have seen him more nearly than I, I leave you to judge of it. But I cannot help fearing that if any one should make him an advantageous offer—if the Court of Vienna, or rather of England, should think it essential to detach him from us, he would not be scrupulous about devising a pretext for separating himself from our alliance. I open my heart to you. I pray you burn my letter.

After events showed that Fleury had formed a very mistaken estimate of Frederic's want of judgment and forethought, but for the rest his suspicions were thoroughly well grounded. The moral rule which the king of Prussia laid down for his own guidance was curtly expressed in a letter to Podewils of May 12: "If anything is to be gained by being honest men, we shall be so; and if it is necessary to cheat, let us be rogues;" and, true to the principle so enunciated, he had taken even excessive precautions to ensure the secrecy of his treaty with France, in order that he might be better able to continue the negotiations with England. The secret was, however, not so well kept but that the English government had pretty accurate information concerning it. So early as March 16 Lord Harrington wrote to Mr. Robinson that the king had intelligence, which might absolutely be depended on, that France was on the point of throwing off the mask, of acting openly against the queen of Hungary, and of supporting the elector of Bavaria with thirty thousand men; and also that she had a treaty on foot, and very far advanced, with the king of Prussia, the terms of which are correctly stated.

The knowledge of this gave a stimulus to the English efforts, and Robinson was instructed to impress on the court of Vienna "the absolute necessity which his Majesty apprehends there is for their endeavoring to make it up, if possible, and without the least loss of time, with the king of Prussia," and, for that purpose, even to cede to him the whole of lower Silesia. The queen of Hungary was, however, firm in her determination to yield nothing. She refused all terms, and Lord Harrington, enforcing the necessity of the position, wrote again on June 21: "If your court continue under their infatuation, you must let them feel that his Majesty thinks it a very ill return to the many essential and expensive proofs he has given of his disposition to assist and support the house of Austria." Robinson accordingly put the case before the grand duke in very strong language, and,

as enforcing his arguments, told him "that England would, by its situation, be the last to suffer in the ruin which I saw his court was bringing upon its own head and that of all Europe." "Yes," he answered, "that cursed ditch which separates you from the Continent. Would to God you were upon the latter; then you would feel like us."* After some days, however, the queen consented to a negotiation on the basis of paying to the king of Prussia two million thalers, in consideration of his evacuating the Austrian territory; and, in exchange for his claims on Silesia, ceding to him an equivalent in the Netherlands, as, for instance, in Gelderland. Robinson was deputed to carry the proposals to the Prussian camp, and, in concert with Lord Hyndford, to lay them before Frederic. Hyndford broached the subject beforehand, and Frederic slyly communicated his news to Valori. "This," he said, "is a trap to embroil me with you; but to give the king time, I will ask to consider it, and will make such extravagant propositions that they will not be able to accept them." Then, chuckling over the idea of duping the English, he added, "Is it my fault if they are fools?"

The reception of Robinson took place in the camp at Strehlen on August 7. The story has often been told, and in fullest detail, though with much offensive coloring, by Mr. Carlyle, who is indignant and scurrilous because the two English ambassadors—one a "ponderous Scotch lord of an edacious gloomy countenance"—ventured to dispute, even diplomatically, the right of the revered Frederic to rob his neighbor. The king, with every appearance of scorn, with "theatrical gesticulations," and marks of great anger, refused all that Robinson had to offer—refused the money, refused Gelderland, and finally, as though unable to control his rage, "retired precipitately behind the curtain of the interior corner of his tent." Afterwards, as if recovering himself, he sent to ask the two ambassadors to dinner. They accordingly dined with him that day and the next, and having firmly declined a pressing invitation to stay in the camp for two or three days "to assist at some kind of military exercise," they were told by Podewils, "with great expressions of politeness," that Mr. Robinson might consider the second dinner as "an audience of leave." "But," says Robinson, "what was most remarkable,

* Robinson to Harrington, June 27, 1741. By some mistake, the Duke de Broglie has attributed this remark of the grand duke to Maria Theresa.

when I let drop in this last conversation, as if France would certainly abandon, for its own views, the king of Prussia, M. Podewils said, 'Non, non, la France ne nous plantera pas, parce que nous ne l'avons pas plantée.'*

Meantime the French, some forty thousand strong, had crossed the Rhine, and were marching to form a junction with the Bavarian army. They professed to come solely as allies, to save Bavaria from being crushed; but Maria Theresa and her ministers were unable to discriminate between the offensive and defensive nature of the alliance: almost at the same time, they received news of the failure of Robinson's negotiation, of the occupation of Breslau, which had immediately followed, and of the near approach of the Franco-Bavarian army. Another French army, under the Marshal de Maillebois, threatening Hanover, extorted from the elector an engagement to remain neutral and to offer no opposition to the election of Charles Albert; and though Robinson assured the queen that this did not affect the English policy, she was unable to distinguish in her own mind between the king of England and the elector of Hanover. Russia, too, was powerless by reason of the active hostility of Sweden in the north; and Maria Theresa, without an army, without allies, with enemies on all sides, resolved, in defiance of the advice of her counsellors, to appeal to the Hungarians.

This was contrary to the policy which had become traditional with the house of Austria: the Hungarians were always in a state of discontent and generally of revolt: if they got arms, it was said, no one could say what use they might make of them. It may have been the extremity of her danger, it may have been an inspiration of genius that taught Maria Theresa that the discontent was the offspring of distrust: that a nation of warriors was aggrieved at being precluded from the joys and the glories of war. Her appeal to the Hungarian Diet roused the hearts of her hearers, banished discontent, and called one hundred thousand men to arms; and seeking of their own free-will what they had before refused, they begged that

the husband of their queen might be proclaimed regent of the kingdom. He accordingly took the oaths to the States assembled; after which, the queen, having the infant prince brought into the hall, took him in her own arms, and in dumb show presented him to her loyal Hungarians. A wild cry of rapturous enthusiasm rang through the hall; and every sword flashed from its sheath, amid shouts of "Vitem et sanguinem consecramus!" "Moriatur pro rege nostro, Maria Theresa!" The words are traditional, but they are as natural and probable as they are noble; and we have no hesitation in accepting them as historical, though Mr. Carlyle does attempt to discredit the whole story, because there has been some confusion between the two assemblies, and because "the baby weighed sixteen pounds avoirdupois when born." What has such rubbish to do with the matter? But the armed insurrection was a great fact, and within a few weeks the queen found herself at the head of an army, composed of the most warlike tribes in Europe, ill-disciplined indeed, but, even so, comparing not unfavorably with any but the carefully drilled troops of Frederic himself.

During this time, the flood which had threatened to overwhelm her, which had borne the allies on towards Vienna, had sensibly abated. They had not grasped the fortune that was offered to them, and the opportunity was now past. The fact seems to have been that the elector of Bavaria, who was nominally the commander-in-chief, had neither force of character nor military capacity, and he delegated his authority to Marshal Töring, whom the French officers were unwilling to obey. Nominally, they were under the immediate command of Belle-Isle; but Belle-Isle was absent on his diplomatic business, and his men were left without any real head. Jealousies between the Bavarians and the French, and even amongst the French themselves, deprived the army for the time of all power for active operations. It thus lay at Lintz through the whole of September; and when, in the beginning of October, it began its march, it did not move onwards to Vienna, but towards the left, to attempt the conquest of Bohemia.

Frederic was, not unnaturally, much annoyed at the neglect of the allied interests, and at the military incapacity which had so utterly thrown away the opportunity of striking a deadly blow at the common enemy. The capture of Vienna

* Robinson to Harrington, August 9, 1741. — Raumer and Carlyle (who had consulted the original despatch) both refer this curious remark of Podewils to the first day, immediately after the withdrawal of the king. The Duke de Broglie, following Raumer, has made the same mistake; but, quoting apparently from memory, he has gravely altered the meaning, and has given it: "Non, la France ne nous plantera pas là, à moins cependant, ajouta-t-il, après quelques instants d'hésitation, que nous ne la plantions là nous-mêmes."

would, he may have supposed, have virtually ended the war, or at any rate have definitely given Silesia to him. He had never publicly acknowledged the treaty with France, reserving to himself the chance of "planting" his ally; and the disgust which he now felt may have rendered him more accessible to the overtures of Austria. He had, or professed to have, a bitter dislike to Robinson, of whom in his "*Mémoires*," he speaks as "*une espèce de fou*," "*un fanatique*;" but he was ready to listen to the offers of Lord Hyndford. It was thus that arose that extraordinary, and — as far as Frederic was concerned — that most discreditable negotiation, which finally took form, on October 9, at Klein-Schnellendorf, in a verbal agreement between the king in person, accompanied by his agent, Colonel Goltz, and the Austrian Marshal Neipperg, with whom was General Lentulus, Lord Hyndford being also present. According to this agreement, the king was to take Neisse after a pretended but innocuous siege of fourteen days, and was then to go peaceably into winter quarters in upper Silesia, undertaking, however, not to levy contributions. Neipperg, on the other hand, was to be free to march with his army towards Moravia, and thence in any direction he chose. The whole was to be kept as an inviolable secret, to which, at the request of the king of Prussia, Neipperg, Lentulus, and Hyndford gave their words of honor. This is the bare outline of what appears in the official protocol drawn up by Lord Hyndford, the result of much conversation and argument.

The king [wrote Hyndford to Lord Harrington] stayed above two hours, and all the while talked with the greatest concern for the queen and the Duke of Lorraine, and gave Marshal Neipperg his advice with regard to the operations against his allies, and recommended to him particularly to make Prince Lobkowitz join him with all his force, to strike a stroke before the allies should join; if he were successful he insinuated little less than that he would take part with the queen; but if she was still unlucky he must look to himself.

The low cunning by which Frederic hoodwinked, or, as he would have said, cajoled Valori, and the utter want of faith towards his allies, have, from the very first noising abroad of this convention, been held up to the opprobrium of all honorable men. Even Frederic himself, whom we are far from including in that category, cannot excuse his conduct; and in his endeavors to do so, has really shown

it in — if possible — a still worse light. What he has said amounts to this: that though, indeed, he had causes of complaint against France, they were not sufficient to induce him to break with her. He had therefore no such design, whilst making this convention; he knew that the queen of Hungary only entered on it in order to sow mistrust and dissension between the allies; and that therefore he had insisted on the most profound secrecy, feeling sure that it would not be kept, and that the agreement would thus be annulled. All which he exactly contradicts three pages further on, where he says that he agreed to a truce in order to prevent Austria from being crushed by France, and Germany being broken up into a number of virtually French provinces. And in still a third story he says that he had discovered that Fleury was carrying on secret negotiations on the part of France, and had offered to sacrifice the allies on condition of being put in possession of Luxemburg and part of Brabant.* The three excuses or explanations so offered are incompatible with each other, and are, one and all, absolutely false. Frederic agreed to the truce, meaning it to hold, if it seemed convenient to him; meaning also to break it, if to break it seemed more advantageous. Mr. Carlyle, who here, as in other passages, outfrederics Frederic, admits that, in truth, the negotiations "are of a questionable, distressing nature," but asserts as a partial — not complete — consolation to the ingenious reader, that "they are escorted copiously enough by a correspondent sort on the French side."

Magnanimous [he says] I can by no means call Friedrich to his allies and neighbors, nor even superstitiously veracious in this business; but he thoroughly understands, he alone, what just thing he wants out of it, and what an enormous wigged mendacity it is he has got to deal with. For the rest he is at the gaming-table with these sharpers; their dice are all cogged — and he knows it, and ought to profit by his knowledge of it; and, in short, to win his stake out of that foul weltering melley, and go home safe with it if he can.

With which astounding falsehood — nothing less, for there was not and is not a trace of suspicion that France was not playing strictly "on the square" — with further abuse of "seething diplomacies and monstrous wigged mendacities, horribly wicked and desperately unwise,"

* *Cœuvres historiques de Frédéric II.* (Preuss. 1846), ii. 91, 94.

amid which the young king stands "supremely adroit — clear as a star — sharp as cutting steel;" with this, and speaking of Hyndford as "a long-headed, dogged kind of man, with a surly, edacious strength," and applying the name of Smelfungus to any one who ventures not to approve of this "immorality," "this playing with loaded dice," he closes the argument. But rant and nicknames cannot convert cheating into honesty, or base lies into truth; and after a careful study of the facts, as laid down in the "*Politische Correspondenz*" and in Lord Hyndford's despatches, of the explanations of Frederic, and of the comments by Mr. Carlyle and the Duke de Broglie, we have no hesitation in accepting the pithy conclusion of this last, "that for a man to concert matters with his enemies at the expense of his friends is called treason, in all languages, and in all countries."

Notwithstanding the pledges which had been given at Klein-Schnellendorf, it was out of the question that the secrecy could be maintained; the actions of the parties betrayed it, without any necessity for words. The sham siege and the sham defence of Neisse were carried on in the face of all Europe, and could not be misunderstood. No disinterested person had any doubt; and, though Belle-Isle was loth to believe that his handiwork — the treaty which, with so much scheming and labor, he had got signed — was so much waste paper, his correspondence with Amelot, the French minister for foreign affairs, betrays his extreme uneasiness. "The king of Prussia," he wrote on October 17, eight days after the date of the convention —

The King of Prussia is going into winter-quarters without following Neipperg. Nothing he could do would be so injurious to the Elector of Bavaria and the common cause. Neipperg is left free to enter Bohemia, and, with his united forces, prevent the siege of Prague or cut off the Elector's communication with the Danube. If it was possible to give way to suspicions of the fidelity and honesty of this prince, there are plenty of grounds for doing so. From all parts of the country I hear how much our friends are disheartened and the Austrians inspired by the belief that there is an understanding between the King of Prussia and the Queen of Hungary. The Elector of Bavaria himself is strongly of this opinion.

On the 30th, Amelot, writing to Belle-Isle, says:—

The conduct of the King of Prussia is in every respect inexcusable, and I only hope this bad faith does not go further than we can yet

see. The retreat of M. de Neipperg gives rise to strange thoughts.

The rumor and belief daily strengthened, notwithstanding the contradictions and asseverations of Frederic's ministers and of Frederic himself. That he, having acted the foul part he had done, should deny it, was a matter of course; but for a king, the foundation of honor, knowingly and deliberately to pledge his word of honor to a lie, is what we had believed to be an impossibility. We find that even this baseness was within the reach of Mr. Carlyle's peculiar bright "star." It is thus described by Valori, who had spoken to the king about the unpleasant rumors which reached him. "What can I do?" he answered; "can I hinder knaves spreading these reports, and fools believing them?" "But," said Valori, "the rumor comes from Marshal Neipperg himself." "Has he said that?" retorted the king; "it's a falsehood, which will cost him dear." Valori then urged him to take an active part in the Bohemian campaign.

I will not take a step in Bohemia [he said]; it is too late. I may perhaps lend you a regiment of Hussars, just to show that there is no such agreement as is spoken of, but nothing more. In February I will see what state you are in. If I am satisfied with your arrangements, and the magazines which you have established, I will act with you; not otherwise. I will not make war as a subordinate; I will do as I think best. Depend on my word of honor (*comtez sur ma parole d'honneur*) that the agreement is not made, and will not be made except in concert with my allies; but with the same truth I tell you that my troops shall not move during the winter.

Not only had the agreement been made in the manner already described, but the definitive treaty which, as was hoped, would result from it, was in active preparation. December had been named as the limit within which it was to be signed; and Colonel Goltz, writing to Lord Hyndford to accelerate matters, added, "It is the queen's favorable chance; *aut nunc aut nunquam*." The king of Prussia thus stood balancing between opposing interests, between the treaty with Bavaria and the treaty with Austria. Whichever way he inclined, he must commit perjury and treason, but the particular form of them was left to be determined by the course of events. German writers are fond of dwelling on the true national feeling which dictated Frederic's crooked policy at this time. They accept his statement that he was guided by a desire to preserve an

equilibrium between France and Austria, and by a determination not to allow Austria to be crushed. That such reasons are purely imaginary is proved, not by Frederic's contradictory statements — for one might have as good a claim to be believed as another, and all are equally false — but by his action during the winter.

The allied Franco-Bavarian army was advancing against Prague, which had a sufficient garrison and was expected to make a stout defence until relieved by Neipperg. It was, however, brilliantly carried off-hand on November 26, in an unlooked for assault, planned and conducted by the Count de Saxe, who sent off the news to Belle-Isle the same night. The marshal was at this time lying sick at Dresden, the victim of rheumatic fever, anxiety, and overwork. But the news from Prague had the happiest effect, and his illness at once took a favorable turn. But other good news came in as well; for the success of the allies was the inclination of the balance which the king of Prussia had been waiting for. When the wild tribes of Hungary were gathering for the defence of their queen, and when the French army signally failed in the first object of the campaign, Frederic, we are asked to believe, was seized with alarm lest France should so overpower Austria as to threaten the liberties of Germany, and hastened to agree to a truce, to accept a treaty. When, on the other hand, the French had rendered themselves masters of Prague, when Charles Albert had been crowned king of Bohemia, December 7, 1741, when a terrible, perhaps a fatal blow, had been struck against the house of Austria, this patriotic and national prince at once cast the truce to the winds, confirmed the alliance with France, and wrote to Belle-Isle, on November 30, congratulating him on his glorious conquest, and putting at his disposal sixteen squadrons of dragoons and hussars to help him in gathering in the fruits of it, to which, on December 9, he added: "Send me word as soon as you know what Neipperg is likely to do. My fingers are itching to be of distinguished service to my dear elector." "I quite understand," said Belle-Isle, when he read; "he comes to our assistance, when we are no longer in want of it."

Valori, as we have seen, had had his own suspicions, which even the royal "word of honor" had not altogether removed. The king now again assured him, with many oaths, that never, no, not even in imagination, had he dreamed of

treating with the queen of Hungary. "I defy you," he said, "to show me a scrap of paper as big as my hand which can prove that I had." Valori hinted that the capture of Neisse gave grounds for suspicion. "Well," said the king, "and haven't you taken Prague without resistance? Mightn't I just as well say that you had an understanding with the queen?" But to Lord Hyndford, who was, in this matter, behind the scenes, he said:—

The Austrians have been guilty of another folly in suffering Prague to be taken under their nose without risking a battle. If they had been successful, I do not know what I should have done. But now we have 130,000 men as against 70,000 of theirs, and it is to be imagined we should beat them, and they have nothing to do but to submit, and to make as good a peace as they can.

In reality, the aspect of Austrian affairs at this time was gloomy enough; for, in addition to other misfortunes, the revolution in St. Petersburg, which had placed Elizabeth on the throne, had also broken the only alliance from which Austria could hope for effective aid. The tsarina, who had fancied herself in love with Louis XV., and who, had distance permitted, might perhaps have contested the high post occupied successively by the fair daughters of the house of Nesle, hastened to make peace with Sweden at the same time that she assured the French minister of her friendly sentiments. The Count de Belle-Isle had absolutely nothing to do with this revolution and the consequent change in the Russian policy, any more than he had with the capture of Prague; but he was ambassador of France as well as commander-in-chief of the French army, and both the diplomatic and military triumphs shed their glory round his head. He had, however, for some time back tried to swell his own importance by complaining to his government that the double task was too much for him; and, yielding to what they possibly supposed that he wished, the king relieved him of one part of it, and appointed Marshal de Broglie to the post of commander-in-chief. The supersession was softened by the fact that M. de Broglie was not only senior to Belle-Isle, but the senior marshal in the French army; still, Belle-Isle was much annoyed, and, although he could not actually complain of having been taken at his word, it was pretty generally understood in the army that hostile criticism of Broglie was the surest way of cultivating the favor of Belle-Isle, whose court influ-

ence was supposed to be more powerful, and whose less advanced age would allow him longer time to exercise it. This feeling brought Belle-Isle a number of letters from the senior officers; the most extraordinary, from a military point of view, that have perhaps ever been written. They have little bearing on the political history of the period, but incidentally they illustrate the curious state of discipline in the French army, which permitted or even encouraged officers of high rank, on active service and in presence of the enemy, to cabal against each other and their commander-in-chief, and go far to explain the small success and the repeated disasters of the French arms both in this war and in the next.

The king of Prussia, also, was much annoyed at the change. He had believed in Belle-Isle, who had, indeed, ably conducted the negotiations for the election of Charles Albert to a successful issue (January 24, 1742), and who was, it might be supposed, bound by personal as well as political motives to foster the alliance which was mainly his handiwork. On the other hand, he had some particular aversion or contempt for Broglie, who had no obligation to maintain Belle-Isle's policy, and who, at the age of seventy, might be considered to belong to an old and effete school. This feeling grew to one of violent hatred; the very mention of the marshal's name threw Frederic into wild fits of passion, and he himself could not utter it without joining to it a number of insulting and indecent epithets, of which he had an inexhaustible store. It went so far that Valori wrote on February 18, "To let the king of Prussia see that Marshal de Broglie might derive the least advantage from any course, even though it was clearly the best, was quite enough to set him absolutely against it."

This flaw in the alliance, and these cabals in the French army, were the preservation of Austria. The French garrison in Linz was forced to capitulate; the expedition which Frederic led into Moravia utterly failed; and both, by reason of the want of concord and co-operation. In England, almost at the same time, Walpole was compelled to resign; and Carteret, who became virtually the head of the government, was known to be in favor of active interference in the cause of Maria Theresa; whilst in Italy, the king of Sardinia declared that he would not permit any further aggrandisement of the house of Bourbon, and, though reserving his own claims, undertook the defence of

the Milanese. The position of Austria was felt to be no longer critical; that of the allies might become so, if the forces of England and Holland should really enter on the campaign; and Frederic—whose views of the balance of power were peculiar—fell back on the old project of a treaty with the queen.

The pros and cons which he noted down for his own consideration are worthy of careful study; as evidence of fact, they are of the highest authority, and prove, in despite of all that he said or wrote afterwards, that suspicion of treason on the part of the French had no place in his mind, and had no influence on his conduct. His words, written about the end of March or beginning of April,* are: "It is bad for a man to break his word without reason; up to the present time I have no room to complain of France or of my allies;" and that these refer to political not to military matters is shown by the corresponding con, which is: "The bad arrangements which the French make, rendering it almost certain that they will again be beaten somewhere in detail." For the rest many of the reasons which eventually prevailed in favor of the peace are just and sound; such as, "If England and Holland declare war on the cardinal in Flanders, he will be obliged to withdraw a great part of the French troops from Germany, and will leave me charged with the whole weight of the war. The treaty, as it stands, gives only a simple guarantee, without stipulating the number of troops," which had been verbally fixed at forty thousand. In another place he notes, "The considerable sums which the war costs;" and again, "The large succors which the queen is on the point of receiving from Hungary; the chances of fortune, which might take from me all that I have gained; and the general war, which might extend, by way of Hanover, into my own country."

All these and other similar considerations are, in themselves, perfectly reasonable, and such as no politician could object to; but the one consideration which to an honest man would have been the first has no place on either side. There is no mention of the duty which a true soldier had towards his allies; that having by his own intrigues, his own earnest solicitations brought the French soldiers into Bohemia, he was morally bound, so

* Politische Correspondenz, Nos. 768, 769, vol. ii., pp. 98, 99. The papers are not dated, but are so assigned by the editors. The Duke de Broglie thinks they might be placed rather earlier.

far as lay in his power, to see them safely out of it. Of such a duty he had no thought; for it he made no provision; but patched up the peace for himself alone, with the utmost eagerness and privacy. When Lord Hyndford appeared loth to have anything more to do with secret negotiations, he directed Count Podewils to offer him a bribe of one hundred thousand thalers (15,000*l.*) for his good offices. Hyndford—edacious Scotchman that he was—disdainfully refused it: "The king," he said, "does not know me, nor the English nobility,"—or words to that effect; and though he undertook to transmit the proposals to Vienna, he was cautious not in any way to commit himself to their acceptance or even to their recommendation. The business thus dragged heavily, and in no way answered to the impatience of Frederic, who, rightly judging that the successes and improved hopes of the Austrians were making the queen more obstinate, resolved to try the fortune of battle, and, as a simple measure of diplomacy, marched into Bohemia, ranged his army near Chotusitz, across the path of the advancing Austrians, fought with them on May 17, and defeated them. The Austrians retreated and were not pursued. To the French, the king spoke of his heavy losses or of his want of supplies; but in reality he considered that what he had done was sufficient for his purpose; the battle was not so much an incident of the campaign as of the negotiations, and was designed, not to strengthen Charles Albert, but to convince Maria Theresa. In this it was fully successful, and the preliminaries of peace between Austria and Prussia were signed at Breslau on June 11.

Not, however, till the 18th did Frederic, with impudence and falsehood peculiarly his own, announce this treaty to Fleury, Belle-Isle, and the emperor; to each laying the blame on the inefficiency of the French army and the ineptitude of the French commander-in-chief, which exposed him to such danger that, as in a shipwreck, he was compelled, by the natural laws of self-preservation, to shift for himself regardless of others. The news fell on them like a thunder-clap, for, though it had been proposed that negotiations for the common benefit should be set on foot, nobody had suspected that they were being carried on for the common ruin. Belle-Isle had even spoken on the subject to the king of Prussia, who had said that he thought peace ought to be concluded

without delay. "On what conditions?" asked Belle-Isle. Frederic answered oracularly, "*Beatus est posedendi*," and, for fear of mistakes, wrote it afterwards with his own hand to Podewils. His friendly editors have converted the phrase into "*Beati possidentes*," the meaning of which can at least be guessed at, but seems to have no reference to the terms of the actual treaty. Nothing was said about the Bavarians, nothing about the French. The Austrians were left free, with their whole force, to fall on the army in Bohemia, whilst the English and the Dutch, or—as the worst might be apprehended—even the Prussians, blocked its retreat. From its serious consequences to France, the treaty of Breslau neither unnaturally nor unjustly calls down the Duke de Broglie's heaviest censure; but we can conceive that a zealous partisan might excuse, or even defend it, on the grounds of political expediency; and though we cannot accept such excuse or defence, though we think that the bare fact, without any consideration of results, would warrant the severest judgment, we may admit that, from the moral or abstract point of view, it was pure and honorable in comparison with the invasion of Silesia or the convention of Klein-Schnellendorf.

That history is philosophy teaching by examples has often been said, but seldom acted on. There are many, even of those charged with the conduct of affairs, who would seem to think that history is a subject which ought to be confined to girls' boarding-schools; it is rather the subject which, of all others, is the proper study of the politician and the statesman. This may be enunciated as a general proposition, but it is emphatically true of this special instance. It is impossible to read these carefully written volumes without tracing, with their author, the similarity of the course of events in the middle of the last century and in the middle of this. As in the year 1741 France aided and abetted in the spoliation of Austria, so did she, tacitly, at least, in 1866; and as in 1757 she paid the penalty for her mistake at Rossbach, so did she in 1870 at Sedan. The alliance of Prussia has proved, in the long run, almost more fatal to her than even the enmity of that State.

With the treaty of Breslau the Duke de Broglie closes his narrative—we trust only for the present. It is a convenient halting-place, but the tangled diplomacy of the years that follow have, not only to every Frenchman, but to every student

of history, a direct interest which can scarcely fail to induce him to continue his work. The policy of aggression and spoliation which Frederic inaugurated, which he carried to a successful issue as against Austria and Poland, which he attempted against Sweden, has become traditional in the house of Hohenzollern, and a scandal in the face of Europe. Even in our own days we have seen Germany "unified," and Denmark fleeced for the aggrandizement of Prussia. Yet German writers and even English writers are not ashamed to speak of such deeds as noble, as grand, as glorious. It is refreshing to step from the stifling and fœtid atmosphere of adulation and pseudo hero-worship, into the clear air of the Duke de Broglie's manly and vigorous denunciation of rapine and falsehood.

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A NORTHMAN'S STORY.

BY MRS. PARR, AUTHOR OF "DOROTHY FOX,"
"ROBIN," ETC.

I.

ON the coast of Norway, half-way between Stavanger and Bergen, among the many lighthouses which mark the spots of especial danger, not one stands more conspicuous than the Folgernaes, a little north of that long, broken line of reef which stretches out from Voldö.

Bare, wild, desolate, the sight of a human habitation on that lonely rock seems to send through the beholder a shudder — there, on the very summit crowning its pinnacle, stands the lighthouse, and by its side the low, white-painted dwelling of those whose duty it is to keep the light in order.

Except for the railed-round walk, levelled to keep watch from, every inch of ground must be scrambled over, and a line of staples driven into the rock points the almost sheer descent to where a boat lies sheltered below.

Seldom do the elements favor the wishes of those who feel a curiosity to land here; and it is mostly due to necessity or misadventure that the spot is ever visited by a stranger. Should chance in either form have carried one there, he would not long ago have been brought face to face with two whose lives by a strange fatality seemed linked together, Henrik Larsen and Nils Kroll.

Though near of an age the one to the other, while Larsen's hair was already

grey, his face lined, and his heavy figure slouched and bent down from the shoulders, Kroll's still youthful-looking face met your gaze with a frank, cheery smile; he was possessed of a fund of good humor, and his movements were quick and active as becomes a smart sailor.

"What made you come here, Nils? What makes you stay?" were questions I had kept on my lips ever since I first saw him, and some years had gone by since then, each season bringing me to Norway to the same neighborhood, when certainly once during my stay I contrived to pass a day — sometimes lengthened into two or three — with my friends the two lighthouse men.

At first Larsen would only growl a reply to me, but about the third year — seeing that my determination not to leave without seeing them made me run a risk of considerable danger — his mood softened, and, after his sombre fashion, he deigned to bid me welcome. Nils's pleasure in my company was very outspoken, and steadily increased as we got to know each other better. In his early days he had spent some time in England, and though by every opportunity I had, through magazines and newspapers, I tried to quench his thirst for knowledge, much more satisfactory to him than reading was my presence and the intercourse we held together.

Larsen usually took advantage of my being there to have a fit of "the shivers," only a pretext for Nils enjoying my company unrestrainedly, as whatever there was to do he did it. Nothing would have given him greater offence than for Nils to disturb himself in any way.

"I talk it all over with him after," Nils would say; "and that's what he likes — if he ever listens to what's going on it must be in his own way."

I smiled. Time had taught me how attached to each other were these men; the causes which bound them still remained a mystery.

There are occasions when confidences seem begotten by the atmosphere; the sun, the sky, the moaning wind each brings an influence to bear. Nils and I, sheltered in a hollow — where, dropped in the rock, we could stand leaning our elbows on a ledge in front of us — were watching the departing glories of a northern sunset. It was late in the season. I was homeward bound, the next day was the day of parting. I had seized the opportunity of unusually calm weather to pay an extra visit to Folgernaes while

waiting for the steamer which would put in for me on its way to Stavanger.

A few hours before, when all around was calm and still, Larsen—to whom croaking came as natural as a raven—predicted that there would be more wind, and now the clouds broken up in fleecy masses over the sky promised that the morrow would bear truth to his prophecy. The edge of each cloud was a golden setting which deepened and spread out towards the fiery orb already slowly sinking.

I do not know how long we had stood silent—we were both smoking—when, as well as I can remember, for the first time I heard Nils sigh heavily.

"I fear, my poor fellow," I said, "this half imprisonment is often very irksome to you."

He shook his head, but in a way that did not quite answer me, and suddenly I found myself asking why he had come, what had brought him there, and he was saying, "I'll tell you. I should like you to know, what nobody else has ever heard, my story—which means the story of us two. Henrik," and he nodded back to the lighthouse, where Larsen was trimming the lamp, "and I were both born in Bergen, and from children there ran the streets together. What made us such close chums I don't know, for his people were more well-to-do than mine; he had a father living, I but a widowed mother. Besides this, he was three years older—something important that in the age of boys; and then the difference in our dispositions, nothing could be wider. He was shy and retiring, called sullen because he did not speak, and obstinate when he would not give way. Somehow I could generally manage him, and coax him out of any ill-humor; and not seeing his faults, as others named them, he obtained a great influence over me. I worshipped his resolution and his courage to endure, and looked on him as a hero because, though his father might thrash him within an inch of his life, he could not make him give in.

"Old Larsen was an ill-conditioned, violent man; and all the family, it seemed to me, except Henrik, were like him. There was little peace in the house, so Henrik took to spending his evenings with me; my mother, because he was attached to me, making him welcome, although on a few occasions he drew on himself her displeasure by betraying jealousy.

"While still a very young lad, with my

mother's apron-string not loosened round me, it became necessary that I should part from her. A shipmate of my father's came over from North Shields. He was in want of a boy, and he made an offer for me. To be turned into sailors seemed to me then the sole reason why boys were brought into the world. All my companions, their fathers, the men we knew, were connected with the sea. How was it possible to have any other ambition? My heart was filled with joy to think I was about to enter on this life. I knew of only two regrets: I had to part from my mother, and Henrik was not going with me. Old Larsen had other views for him; he meant to place him with a cousin, who was a fish-salter.

"That first rough apprenticeship was the beginning of my picking up the English I know, and it served me in good stead when I got back again to Bergen and was looking about for something better to do.

"Four years I had been absent, and it seemed as if it could not have been more than a day, for all was as I left it. I knew the people I met in the streets, although not one of them remembered me; the wares in the shop-windows looked still familiar; and Mother Olsen, sitting in the Torv Almendingen under the steps of Handelsmand Dybvad's house, had the same horns of currants and tied-up sticks of cherries, and was knitting away at the long leg of a stocking just as I left her.

"I quickened my steps home, because the tears would come into my eyes—all my life through they've played me that nasty trick of getting suddenly watery. My mother, I asked myself—would she recognize me?

"One of the first questions I put after freeing myself from her embrace was, 'And Henrik, where is he?'

"Very little letter-writing had been kept up between us while I was away. Mother, with four of them younger than me to work for, had too much to do, and I was a slave, kicked and driven by everybody. It was the usual fate of a collier-boy in that day.

"Henrik has left Bergen. His father is mad against him. He has run away.' Where, she did not know, only he had gone to sea, 'to seek you,' she added, 'for he has never had another friend.'

"No more had I; but then, a stranger in a foreign land, I had no opportunity; Henrik had many. His constancy flattered my vanity, which, as I dare say you have seen, is a weak point with me.

"That evening I set to work to find him out, and very soon I was put on his track; so that, having got a berth on board a Hamburger detained in Bergen for repairs, at Hamburg I came upon him, and it was not long before he joined our ship's company; and thus the intimacy of our boyhood was restored.

"By this time I could not help seeing that Henrik had grown into a queer kind of chap; not that I had anything to complain of, excepting through his jealousy. No matter who it might be — old, young, man, dog (we had not the chance of its being a woman in those days) — if they liked me he hated them, and would go to work at scheming how he could set us one against the other.

"Lots of chaps wanted to chum with me. Not one cared for Larsen. I cannot quite tell why. If he was rough and surly, so were they; at least the most of them. Still, by common consent he was treated as an outsider — seldom noticed, never confided in.

"Strange as it seems, this did not appear to give him so much pain as it gave me; and, to my surprise, I soon noticed, that while they might slight or annoy him without rousing his anger, I had but to show the most trivial preference for anybody to throw him into a fury. A slavish affection is certain to become irksome, and I was beginning to fret under the gall of its fetter when, we having by this time reached Montevideo, I fell sick of the fever.

"It was desperately hot weather, and we were taking in hides for our cargo, the sun beating down on our heads, so that you had to gasp with every breath. Stupid, foolhardy, with no knowledge of danger, because precautions interfered with my pleasure, I refused to take them; and being struck down senseless was the penalty. It was then Henrik showed his devotion. He deserted from the ship rather than leave me, and sold and spent everything he had until he was left with not much more than the shirt on his back in his endeavors to pull me through. It was to his care I owed my life, and tears in great drops rolled down his cheeks the first time I was able to speak to him in my usual way. After I had once answered the helm, I went along with my head to wind, and was soon all right again; but, with no respectable clothes and our money gone, the two of us had a roughish time. We were forced to work at whatever came to hand — from serving liquor at a bar, to doing the dirty bidding of a nigger-driver.

"At last, through hanging about the port, we stumbled across a Norwegian whose ship hailed from Nieuwediep. Its captain was a Dutchman, and having listened to our story, which we told him truly, he believed us, advanced money for our clothes, and took us aboard with him, though she was a leaky old tub, and not the sort of craft we had been used to. Out of gratitude we stayed by her the whole trip, returned in her, and soon found our way back to Norway. I went home, but Henrik didn't care to face his family, so we parted at Christiania, where he entered on board a coaster, and I soon after found a similar berth in another.

"I was very well satisfied with my position; but though we found opportunities to meet frequently, Henrik was discontented. He made a grievance that I did not care to be with him, and so constantly worried me, that at length one evening, when we had met at Stavanger and were ashore there, I gave him a promise that I would look out for a foreign-going ship, in which we could again be together.

"Delighted that he had gained his point, he became, for him, quite jovial. Nothing would do but we must have an extra glass to drink luck to the undertaking, and afterwards we strolled down to the landing-place and stood smoking.

"On an evening like this I can always bring that long past one back to me. Again in my ears sound that voice: I strain them to catch its melody.

"Listen!" I said to Henrik, 'they are singing,' and I motioned him to go closer up to the house, through whose open windows the music reached us. Two persons were singing, the voices of a man and a woman; one of them played an accompaniment on a guitar. Even now I cannot tell what spell fascinated me, but after the song had stopped, I pushed Henrik away. 'Wait,' I said, 'perhaps she'll sing again.' 'There are two of them,' was his reply. There might have been a dozen, I listened but to one, the notes of a voice that had entranced me.

"At twelve o'clock that night my vessel left Stavanger to continue on its journey, and as we slowly steamed away I fixed my eyes on the house, and made myself a promise that on our return I would find out who was the singer. But some months went by and I had not found my opportunity, though by that time I had contrived to pick out the air, all but two or three bars which always baffled me. One evening at Laurvig I had gone into the

wood expecting to meet Henrik, whose vessel started from there. The townsfolk were flocking up to hear the band, I loitered among the trees expecting him to overtake me. Suddenly all the blood in my body rushed to my head—I heard the song, it was sung by the same singer. Half-a-dozen steps brought me close behind the group—three young girls; they were walking hand in hand together.

"Hush! Signe," said one mischievously, 'somebody is listening,' and turning they were brought face to face so close to me that we all burst out laughing. Among our class of life in this country our manners are free; those who have a fancy for each other need not be kept silent for lack of introduction. Within half an hour of that moment we were all the best friends. I had been told by them who they were, and in turn they knew what there was to hear about me. When the other two had paired off with young fellows whom we met on the way, I found courage—for I never felt so shy with any one before—to tell Signe how at Stavanger I had listened to her song, and how ever since it had haunted me. Yes, she had but lately returned from Stavanger, where she had been staying with a friend; her home was Laurvig. She was an orphan, but her mother, just before dying, had married again, and she was given a home by her step-father. Talking earnestly together we soon lost her companions, and did not meet them again; as for poor Henrik, I had forgotten all about him.

"Well, that night, the forerunner of many others, left but one thought in my head—when, how, where, should I meet Signe? I loved her madly; the one question I was always asking myself was, 'Did she love me?' Henrik, to whom I confided my fears, scoffed at my timidity. 'Why don't you ask her?' he would say roughly. I did not for answer tell him how often I had tried, but that the words seemed to choke me. And so time went on. I had to leave Laurvig—I came back; again I went away. Sometimes Henrik and I met, sometimes I missed him; when I did so the fault was mine. With Signe I wanted no other company.

"Falling in with him at Christiansand, he surprised me with the news that an offer had been made him of a good berth. A captain from Bergen, whom he knew, was going a voyage to Valparaiso, and if he liked to take it, the post of third mate would be given to him.

"Well, of course you'll go?"

"I should if they had room for two," he said quietly.

"But come, old fellow"—I stopped, not quite knowing how to put what I wanted to say. My love for Signe had changed me completely, and I saw that I had no right to allow him to miss this chance, when I meant to seize the first opportunity. Knowing his temper I began speaking in a roundabout way; he anticipated me.

"I understand," he said. "You mean we needn't be so much together now? All right!" and he was turning away when he stopped. "Look here," he said, "do you care for the berth? If so, take it," and he wheeled himself round brusquely.

"But I was not going to let him part with me that way; for a whole hour I tried to win him to a happier humor, and in doing so opened out my heart and its desires, finally dealing a last fatal blow by saying, 'If I took your offer it would be because of Signe.'

"And it is because of her I make it to you."

"Ah!" I said, with a lover's stupidity; "at last you are beginning to like her, I know, for my sake." But he stopped what I was saying by shaking me off roughly.

"If it's settled that you'll go," he said, "we'd best look up Jansen, and ask him if he'll take you."

"And the result of this visit was that a month later I started for Valparaiso, the betrothed of Signe."

II.

"NEVER try to light a flame near a mine of gunpowder," Signe, with that desire for conquest which seems the thirst of woman's nature, although her heart was given to me, began striving to make Henrik her prisoner.

"I was not without blame in this matter; for, seeing her interested, I had amused her by relating instances of his almost savage jealousy; and now, when ostensibly by virtue of his trust—for I begged him to be a brother to her—he, in hopes of finding an occasion for slander, dogged her footsteps and followed her everywhere, the thought came that she would try if she had the power to make him love.

"People did not call Signe beautiful. I did not think her so myself, but her eyes, like her voice, haunted you. They were tender, deep, sad; they seemed to look down into your heart and leave their light

there. Henrik always looked away from her; it is his habit, you know, more especially if he does not feel well disposed towards a person; and he hated Signe from his very soul, and, strange to say, quickly penetrated the game she was playing with him.

"I, who have been given the confidences of the two, know the fight that went on between them. The lapse of years makes our judgment clearer, and, in full possession of the misery wrought, I still have pity for them. 'Tis said that hate and love often lie closer than we dream they do. One moment Henrik was my friend, the next every barrier was dashed down, and he had clasped Signe to his heart and called her his own.

"Poor child! until that time the love permitted to meet her eyes had run as a placid stream. Suddenly a torrent had overwhelmed her, and by its force carried her breathless away. Fear of the giant she had called to life sealed her lips, stopped her heart—another time she would find courage. When he was gone she would think of what to say. But as a snake with a frightened bird so Henrik's power was cast over Signe. She was no longer mistress of herself; a nature stronger than she had dreamed of held her at its mercy, and Henrik was mad; the love he now felt was a frenzy. Leave her! go, as I had done, for her to make a victim, and fall the prey, of some other? Sooner would he have carried out the temptation often present to his mind of jumping with her into the seething waters, and thus securing his possession forever; and Signe dreamed as much, and the heart in which I still was imaged died away within her. Another influence, too, was brought to bear. Her step-father, desirous of getting married himself, urged Henrik's suit, and the unhappy one, not daring to confess the truth, that it was through her coquetry this savage love had been born, advanced fifty excuses, but never the right one. . . . They were married.

"I had been gone eighteen months, and, driven desperate that I had never been written to by either of them, I was preparing to leave my ship and get some berth in a homeward-bound one, when a former shipmate met me. He had a sister at Laurvig, and she had written to him.

"So you have lost your sweetheart," he said; "and a precious good riddance I should say, since she's taken up with Larsen."

"Larsen! Oh, has she?" Not I, but my lips were speaking: they were making a brave effort for me.

"My sister writes they're soon to be married, too."

"Did I answer? I don't know. The next thing I remembered I was far away out of the town, by myself—alone, where I could roll on the ground, tear up the earth, and call aloud, 'Signe! Signe!'"

"Alas, rage is very impotent, and when it is over there follows dumb misery, harder to bear because it must be hidden. I never doubted but what I had been told was true. In spite of the efforts I had made to cheat myself into a brighter mood, for months there had been hanging over me the certainty of coming evil; but not through Henrik. In my thousand speculations not a doubt of him had ever crossed my mind.

"Oh, Signe! I, who had been reckless and spendthrift, how I had saved and hoarded for you! There was a gay-colored silk shawl, some flowers made from the feathers of birds, white coral, shells, a trinket or two, and the money I had put by. Twenty times I spread out all before me, asking myself, 'What shall I do with this—this, that was meant for her?' and I ended by making it into one parcel and writing on it Signe's name. And I looked about to find a ship going to Norway, and then I entrusted it to the keeping of some one who promised to have it safely delivered to her.

"God help the man who is struck by such a blow when alone and friendless in a foreign land; if he is not to seek death he must find destruction.

"I pass over the next four years of my life, to blot out which I would willingly forfeit half of that which remains to me.

"I had long since left my ship and had entered on board a Chilian one trading between Valparaiso and Rio Janeiro. I was first mate of this vessel, and the crew, grown familiar with a recklessness which they called courage, all obeyed and most of them looked up to me. We were making for the port of Concepcion, some three hundred miles from Valparaiso. It was moderately fair weather, and we calculated that in another couple of days we should reach there; but the night set in cloudy, and in spite of there being a moon the darkness thickened round us. Gradually a heavy fog spread over and hung low on the water, hiding from our sight the silent and terrible rollers, the first warning of which was the fury of one breaking into the ship and drenching to the skin every

soul on board her. Taken aback by the shock, had not the captain from experience been thoroughly familiar with the coast, our situation would have been an awkward one; as it was, we felt anything but secure until about ten on the following morning, when, the wind freshening a little, the haze cleared away and every man breathed more freely. There was nothing now to do but keep the vessel on her course. The captain went below, leaving the charge to me. Some time passed by, and then I believe — although I could never quite ascertain — some one went to rouse him.

"He came on deck, to find that in his absence I had managed that the ship was being steered straight into land again. I don't attempt to describe his anger. To estimate such an error one must be a seaman, and I had not a word to say in defence of a mistake which was inexplicable to myself.

"He was still enlarging on the disaster which my carelessness — he would give no credit to my ignorance — might have led us into, when we were silenced by the cry of something in sight — a ship — and in distress, seemingly; and by the aid of the glass we could see, not far from a towering rock, a vessel which the terrible surf had carried over the shoal and half embedded in the sand. Into my mind leaped the thought that there was the solution of the puzzle — to get aid for these poor fellows was the reason I had blundered. If help was to be given I would give it. Only waiting until we got near enough to get a better view, I put the question to the captain. 'Yes, I could go if any of the rest would go with me.' I asked them — made a sort of speech — and He whose hand must have ruled the helm helped me, so that with one voice they shouted 'Yes.'

"I must pick my crew," I said; and I singled out six men, and the rest helped us to get out the boat, and we started on our way while the captain brought the ship to lie-to as near as the breakers would permit.

"When reading of wrecks and the many men saved from them, I have asked myself how was it I could remember so little of that time of danger. Truly, I can only tell you that we reached the ship; that my first question was, had they any sick or hurt among them; if so, they must be lowered first, then the youngest and least experienced. The boat was thus filled. We left, reached our own ship, and with better heart than before set off back again

for those who were waiting us. I had not left them without swearing a promise that not one should be left behind; but about half-way there came over us a dread that saps the courage of the stoutest sailor. Following us we perceived three sharks, and the men who had voluntarily braved the anger of the waves trembled in every limb at the sight of these monsters of the deep. There was a common pause. I pulled out the revolver I had with me and pointing said, 'The first who stops pulling I shoot dead.' My resolution steadied them; they gave way with all their strength, and the faint sound of a cheer told us how we were gaining ground.

"Between fatigue, exposure, and the extra amount of drink they had taken, for, as far as I could guess, few among the crew were quite sober, the task of getting the men from off the ship was not an easy one. Floating timbers, spars, rigging, threatened with each roller to swamp us, and by the time the last man was in the boat I felt pretty nigh exhausted. I made a pause while word was passed asking if they were all there. The captain, with several others, in trying to throw a line on to the rock had perished before we reached them. The answer came, 'Yes;' but with it a doubt seized me. Stupefied as they seemed, could I trust them? Seizing my moment, I rushed forward. There at the door near the cabin a man was lying prostrate, his face hidden. 'Dead drunk,' I thought; and my hand was on him, when he sprang to his feet. It was Larsen. 'Off with you; leave me,' he cried savagely. 'I'll not be beholden for life to you.'

"'Please yourself,' I growled, turning away. 'Take that to Signe,' and a canvas money-bag was thrown after me; 'tell her if I forced her to marry me, it is by my own free act I make her a widow now.'

"My heart gave a great leap, but at the same instant I felt its bound make me a murderer. I took a step forward, and pointed my revolver so that its muzzle all but touched him.

"'I won't leave you here living,' I cried. 'Come with me or I fire.'

"'Fire.'

"His lips said the word — no sound escaped them. The effort he was making was greater than he had strength to endure, his face blanched as in death, his body fell together, he gave a stagger so that I caught him by the throat, dragged him along, and we stumbled and fell one on top of the other into the boat, where

he lay senseless as a log. For a few minutes I was stunned, but quickly recovering we made all speed back to the ship, where, to the astonishment of all, I laid claim to Henrik. 'I know him,' I said. 'I'll look after him; help me to take him to my cabin.'

"The history of the ill-fated ship we had rescued these men from was one that is very common. She was bound from Rio with a heavy cargo, taken hastily on board and clumsily stowed by a crew made up of men of all nations. The captain who had lost his life, judging from the report given, was a brave fellow, but unable to maintain discipline. At the first show of danger there had been a general rush to the spirit-store, which, although guarded by Larsen — whom they described as a Northman who had only joined lately — they forced, and drank until there was not a sober one left among them. Many were hurt and needed looking after. We had no doctor; the sole charge of Larsen was handed over to me. I need not enter into the details of his illness — a fever with great brain disorder, haunted and tortured by images of Signe and of me. Long before the moment when, reason suddenly returning so that he believed he was dying and wished to make a clean breast of it, I was in possession of how he had sinned and how they both had suffered; the reproaches she had heaped on him, the love she had withheld from him, the ever-gnawing agony of the demon jealousy. At length it became insupportable, and after a terrible scene he had left her, vowing that until he found death he would keep away. His object in getting to Rio was to be somewhere near me, so that through him word might reach me whenever Signe should be free to marry. When it comes to holding converse under the shadow of death, we go very straight to the point, and that day, when, worn out with much speaking, Henrik let himself fall back, to take, as he believed, his last sleep, not a trace of anger was left between us; no forgiveness had been asked, no repentance spoken of, but this full confession was accepted as freely as it was given.

"Well, you know, he recovered; in my turn I brought him back to life, and more I sent him back to Signe. God is my witness that from that time I believe not a thought of jealousy existed between us. With a heart brimming over with satisfaction, I saw him set sail in the ship that was to carry him to Norway and to her. And from that hour, as if I had awakened

from a hideous nightmare, I was a new being. At least I had never been wholly a bad fellow, and much of the folly I had plunged into, instead of distracting, disgusted me. By degrees my lost good temper, even my cheerfulness, came back, and by the time a year had passed I was cherishing thoughts of again seeing my home. It was true that at Bergen there was no good old mother to return to, but my sisters and brothers still were there. In the letter Henrik had sent me after his arrival, he told me he had seen them, for he had been to Bergen to claim some money which, by the death of his father during his absence, had come to him. With it he meant to buy a share in a ship, of which he would be captain; and his only direct mention of Signe was, that when he again went to sea she wished to go with him. That seemed to speak well for their reconciliation. After that I heard no more from Henrik.

"I waited until the following spring before I left my ship, and then there was some delay in hearing of a homeward-bound one. Going down to the port one evening I met a friend.

"'I've just left some one inquiring after you,' he said. 'Larsen, the fellow who we all thought was going to die, you know.'

"'Larsen! he here — what's he doing?'

"'He's captain of a ship; he's got a share in her. They've come from Montevideo with hides, I hear.'

"After that I was not long in meeting Henrik, who was ashore searching for me.

"'Signe is with me,' he said; 'she wants to see you.' I suppose I seemed to hesitate, for as if to urge me he added, 'her health hasn't been good since her baby died. You won't refuse her?'

"'Oh no.' I wished though, all the same, that I could think of some excuse why I should not go. I did not want to have the flavor of this bygone history raked up again. The Signe, she whom I had loved, was dead — this one was now nothing but Henrik's wife to me. We got into a boat, and as we neared where the ship lay, Henrik broke into the midst of something I was telling him by saying, 'You mustn't think her ill; she'll soon be better now — she only looks thin.'

"Thin! This ghost, this shadow, with only the eyes left to remind me. Could it be Signe? — the Signe I had loved; the Signe I now knew had loved me!

"Forgetting everything else, I flung myself down before her, and the tears

poured from my eyes like water. I believe that not one of the three but knew what caused this outburst of sorrow, although each gave a different reason.

"You guess, don't you, that seeing they wished it, I joined them. Henrik was all anxiety to return home. In his opinion the sea did not agree with Signe. The weather, too, had set in warm; and heat, he said, always tried her. Alas! poor fellow, how pitiful were the poor devices he tried to veil the truth with!

"That Signe was dying those who looked at her could not doubt; but to Henrik no one had ever dared to hint as much. Lose her now, just when he had gained her love? Fate could not be so cruel to him. So to me it was that Signe spoke openly, freely conversing of that time when she would no longer be with us. The hope of seeing Henrik and me reconciled to each other had been the strongest motive for her coming so far, and in the solemn talks we had together the sad past was laid bare.

"Henrik and I had so arranged our ship duties that it was not possible for us to be together with Signe; and both of us now felt this a relief. Daily she had grown weaker: she was not able to rise from her bed now. Every motion of the ship gave her such distress that, anxious as we were to get on, we had to lower the sails to stop the rolling. I think, at this time, his bitterest enemy must have felt compassion for Henrik. The unhappy fellow neither ate nor slept. Not a moment's rest did he give himself. Every one could see the agony he suffered; and yet, in face of what was before him, he spoke as if there was still hope for Signe. We had on board with us one of those books about medicines which captains of vessels take to sea with them. In this he was forever searching for some fresh remedy; and because I would entreat him to let her be, he would turn fiercely on me, saying I did not care whether she was well or ill. What mattered it to me?

"One evening as I sat by Signe's side watching—for she had hardly moved or spoken that day—suddenly her hands were stretched out. I turned and, looking on her face, I knew the moment of parting had come. Henrik! how should I get him? I dared not call his name for fear I might disturb her.

"'Signe!' I whispered; 'Signe, do you know me?' and I bent my face down to her, and the half-closed lids gave a quiver,

and then the eyes opened, but not to look at me. The light that came into them was fixed above. A radiance spread over her face, and before its brightness faded the spirit of Signe had passed away.

"'Henrik!' I said, going on deck to him; but before I could add more, at sight of my face he pushed past me, and was down in the cabin. At the threshold I caught hold of him. 'Nothing is of any more good now,' I sobbed. 'In an instant, without a struggle, before I could call you, it was all over. She did not speak. I don't know if she knew me.'

"I fancied this might calm him; but he flung himself forward, and, catching her in his arms, poured out a torrent of reproach on me. I had neglected her. Fool that I was, she had but fainted; it was a swoon! Hadn't I eyes? Could I not see? And he began rubbing her forehead, chafing her hands, calling on every one he could think of to help him. He would have the whole crew down to try and bring back the circulation of her blood. Life had often been restored—after hours he had seen people brought in as dead breathe and move and speak again. So to humor him—for they looked on him as mad—the men came and spent hours in their vain endeavor; and then one by one they stole away, and the poor stricken soul was left alone with her he loved.

"After that night Henrik allowed me to have my will. There was but one order he gave. Signe's body was to be carried with us to land; and then he shut himself up in the cabin where she had lain so long and paid no more heed to anything going on around. What would have happened to the ship had I not been on board her I cannot think. Possibly he might have roused himself; I do not know. As it was, unless to take sufficient food to keep himself alive, he neither moved nor spoke.

"You know full well, I dare say, that sailors are counted very superstitious among men. Their solitary lives feed the imagination, so that they tack their faith to dreams, omens, and apparitions. Presently it became fore-castle talk that among those on board several had seen the ghost of Signe. It was a sign, they said, that her spirit was not at rest, and unless her body was given to the sea some terrible disaster would most certainly overtake us. Vainly to calm these rumors, did I tell

them that though, each night going to see that all was safe, I often stood for hours by the coffin's side, never once had she appeared to me. My words had no weight. Our carpenter lay sick; our boy, a favorite among the crew, fell overboard; the murmurs which until now had been but the rumble of a distant thunder, became distinct and audible, until I was told that no man had engaged with me; I was not the captain there, and unless what they demanded was carried out, they refused any longer to obey. Nothing remained but to tell Henrik, and one evening I went to his cabin, and without preamble, repeated to him what the crew had bid me say. 'So we must bury her,' I added stolidly; for since she died no word of friendship or of sympathy had been exchanged between us two; 'I have made all ready; no one will disturb us. Come with me.' And together we went.

"The moon shed its light over the water; a myriad stars lit up the sky; reverently we lifted our burden, and then slowly lowered it down to the sea. Oh, the agony of that moment, when each waited for the other to let go! The hesitation passed swift as a flash of lightning; there was a splash; a cry wrung from the inmost souls of two men, whose eyes met, as they raised their bent heads, and sobbing fell each on the other's neck.

.....

"Well, from that day Henrik and I have never crossed an angry look or word. We reached home in due time, but between one thing and the other, the cargo being next to spoil, the ship out of repair, all the money he had left him besides that which I had saved was gone. There were berths in plenty open to me, but nothing for him; the sorrow that had tried him so sorely had turned him into an old man, more feeble and bent down than you now see him. For me to leave him would, I saw, be worse than his death-blow; it would cost him his mind. So that when through old Jacob Anders dying the Følger-naes wanted fresh hands, heartily I thanked Heaven for giving us this opening. I am very well off here, more contented than half the people you meet; and as for Henrik, only one place in his eyes will be better, and that is, if ever we should get aloft, there to live, and never again part from Signe."

From The Contemporary Review.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNBELIEF:

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THREE RATIONALISTS.

BY VERNON LEE.

"AND finally," asked Vere, "what do you think is likely to have been the result of Monsignore's wonderful sermon?"

He had gone to meet his two friends in the late summer afternoon; and as they walked slowly toward the old farm on the brink of the common, they had been giving him an account of the sermon which they had just been to hear; a sermon probably intended to overcome the last scruples of one Protestant in particular, a lady on a visit to the neighboring Catholic earl, but ostensibly delivered for the benefit of Protestants in general—that is to say, of as many country folk and stray visitors as could be collected in the chapel of Rother Castle.

"The result," answered Rheinhardt, with that indefinable cosmopolitan accent, neither French nor German, which completed the sort of eighteenth-century, citizen-of-the-world character of the great archæologist; "the result," answered Rheinhardt, "is that Baldwin and I have spent a most delightful and instructive afternoon, and that you would have done so too, Vere, had you not scornfully decided that no Catholicism more recent than that of Saint Theresa deserved the attention of the real æsthetic pessimist."

Vere laughed. "What I want to know is, whether you suppose that Monsignore has succeeded in making another convert?"

"I think he must have succeeded," answered Baldwin; "he had evidently brought that soul to the very brink of the ditch which separates Protestantism from Catholicism; his object was to make the passage quite insensible, to fill up the ditch so that its presence could not be perceived. He tried to make it appear to Protestant listeners that Catholicism was not at all the sort of foreign, illiberal, frog-eating, Guy-Fawkesy bugbear of their fancy; but, on the contrary, the simple, obvious, liberal, modern, eminently English form of belief which they think they have got (but in their hearts must have felt that they have not) in Protestantism. And I really never saw anything more ingenious than the way in which, without ever mentioning the words Catholicism or Protestantism, Monsignore contrived to leave the impression that a really sincere Protestant is already more than half a Catholic. I assure you that, if it had not

been for the awful sixpenny chromolithographs of the Passion, the bleeding wooden Christs, the Madonnas in muslin frocks and spangles, and all the pious tawdriness which makes Rother Chapel look like some awful Belgian or Bavarian church, I might almost have believed, for the moment, that the lady in question would do very wisely to turn Catholic."

"I wonder whether she will?" mused Vere, as they walked slowly across the yielding turf of the common, which seemed, in its yellow greenness, to be saturated with the gleams of sunshine, breaking ever and anon through the film of white cloud against which stood out the dark and massive outline of the pine clumps, the ghostlike array of the larches, and the pale-blue undulation of the distant downs.

"She may or she may not," answered Rheinhardt, "that is no concern of mine, any more than what becomes of the actors after an amusing comedy. What is it to us unbelievers whether one more mediocrity be lost by Protestantism and gained by Catholicism? 'Tis merely the juggler's apple being transferred from the right hand to the left; we may amuse ourselves watching it dancing up and down, and from side to side, and wondering where it will reappear next; that's all."

Vere was fully accustomed, after their three weeks' solitude together, correcting proofs and composing lectures in this south-country farm, to Rheinhardt's optimistic Voltairean levity, his sheer incapacity of conceiving that religion could be a reality to any one, his tendency to regard abstract discussion merely as a delightful exercise for the aristocracy of the intellect, quite apart from any effect upon the thoughts or condition of the less gifted majority. He admired and pitied Rheinhardt, and let himself be amused by his kindly skeptical narrowmindedness.

"Poor woman!" replied Vere, "it does seem a little hard that her soul should be merely an apple to be juggled with for the amusement of Professor Rheinhardt. But, after all, I agree with you that it is of no consequence to us whether she turn Catholic or remain Protestant. The matter concerns only herself, and all is right as long as she settles down in the faith best adapted to her individual spiritual wants. There ought to be as many different religions as there are different sorts of character — religions and irreligions, of course; for I think you, Rheinhardt, would have been miserable had you lived

before the invention of Voltaireanism. The happiness of some souls appears to consist in a sense of vigor and self-reliance, a power of censuring one's self and one's neighbors; and Protestantism, as austere and Calvinistic and democratic as possible, is the right religion for them. But there are others whose highest spiritual *bien être* consists in a complete stripping off of all personality, a complete letting themselves passively be swung up and down by a force greater than themselves; and such people ought, I think, to turn Catholic."

Rheinhardt looked at Vere with a droll expression of semi-paternal contempt. "My dear Vere," he asked, "is it possible that you, at your age, can still believe in such nonsense? Ladies, I admit, may require for their complete happiness to abandon their conscience occasionally into the hands of some saintly person; but do you mean to say that a man in the possession of all his faculties, with plenty to do in the world, with a library of good books, some intelligent friends, a good digestion, and a good theatre when he has a mind to go there, — do you mean to tell me that such a man can ever be troubled by the wants of his soul?"

"Such a man as that certainly would not," answered Vere, "because the name of such a man would be Hans Rheinhardt."

"It is very odd," remarked Baldwin, "that neither of you seem to consider that the lady's conversion can concern anybody except herself; Rheinhardt looks upon it as a mere piece of juggling; you, Vere, seem to regard it in a kind of æsthetic light, as if the woman ought to choose a religion upon the same principle upon which she would choose a bonnet — namely, to get something comfortable and becoming."

"Surely," interrupted Vere, "the individual soul may be permitted to seek for peace wherever there is most chance of finding it?"

"I don't see at all why the individual soul should have a right to seek for peace regardless of the interests of society at large, any more than why the individual body should have a right to satisfy its cravings regardless of the effect on the rest of mankind," retorted Baldwin. "You cry out against this latter theory as the height of immorality, because it strikes at the root of all respect for mine and thine; but don't you see that your assumed right to gratify your soul undermines, what is quite as important, all feeling of true and

false? The soul is a nobler thing than the body, you will answer. But why is it nobler? Merely because it has greater powers for good and evil, greater duties and responsibilities; and for that very reason it ought to have less right to indulge itself at the expense of what belongs not to it, but to mankind. Truth —"

"Upon my word," put in Rheinhardt, "I don't know which is the greater plague, the old-fashioned nuisance called a soul, or the new-fangled bore called mankind." And he pushed open the gate of the farm-garden, where the cats rolled lazily in the neatly gravelled paths, and the hens ran cackling among the lettuces and the screens of red-flowered beans. When they entered the little farm-parlor with its deep chimney recess, curtained with faded chintz, and its bright array of geraniums and fuchsias on the window-ledge, they found that their landlady had prepared their tea, and covered the table with all manner of home-baked cakes and fruit, jugs of freshly cut roses and sweet peas.

"It is quite extraordinary," remarked Rheinhardt, as he poured out the tea, "that a man of your intelligence, Baldwin, should go on obstinately supposing that it can matter a jot what opinions are held by people to whom opinions can never be anything vital, but are merely so many half-understood formulæ; much less that it can matter whether such people believe in one kind of myth rather than in another. Of course it matters to a man like Monsignore, who, quite apart from any material advantage which every additional believer brings to the Church of which he is a dignitary, is fully persuaded that the probable reward for Protestants are brimstone and flames, which his Evangelical opponents doubtless consider as the special lot of Papists. But what advantage is it to us if this particular mediocrity of a great lady refuses to be converted to the belief in a rather greater number of unintelligible dogmas? Science and philosophy can only gain infinitely by being limited strictly to the really intelligent classes; the less all others presume to think, the better —"

"Come now," objected Vere, "you are not going to tell me that thought is the privilege of a class, my dear Rheinhardt."

"Thought," answered Rheinhardt, "is the privilege of those who are capable of thinking."

"There is thinking and thinking," corrected Baldwin; "every man is neither able nor required to think out new truths; but every man is required, at least once

in his life, to take some decision which depends upon his having at least understood some of the truths which have been discovered by his betters; and every man is required, and that constantly, to think out individual problems of conduct, for which he will be fit just in proportion as he is in the habit of seeing and striving to see things in their true light. The problems which he has before him may be trifling and may require only a trifling amount of intellect; but of such problems consists the vast bulk of the world's life, and upon their correct decision depends much of the world's improvement."

"The world's improvement," answered Rheinhardt, "depends upon everything being done by the person best fitted to do it; the material roads and material machinery being made by the men who have the strongest physical muscles and the best physical eyes, and the intellectual roads being cut, and the intellectual machinery constructed, by the men who have the best intellectual muscle and sight. Therefore, with reference to conversions (for I see Baldwin can't get over the possible conversion of that particular lady), it appears to me that the only thing that can possibly concern us in them is, that these conversions should not endanger the liberty of thought of those who can think; and this being gained (which it is, thoroughly, nowadays), that they should not interfere with the limitation of thought to those whose it is by rights. That religious belief is the best which is most conducive to complete intellectual emancipation."

"But that is exactly why I am sorry that Monsignore should make any converts!" cried Baldwin.

"And for that reason," continued Rheinhardt, fixing his eyes on Baldwin with obvious enjoyment of the paradox, "I think that we ought to hope that Monsignore may succeed in converting not only this great lady, but as many ladies, great and small, as the world contains. I beg, therefore, to drink to the success of Monsignore, and of all his accomplished, zealous, and fascinating fellow-workers!" And Rheinhardt drank off his cup of tea with mock solemnity.

"Paradoxical as usual, our eighteenth-century philosopher," laughed Vere, lighting his pipe.

"Not paradoxical in the very least, my dear Vere. Look around you, and compare the degree of emancipation of really thinking minds in Catholic and in Protestant countries: in the first it is complete

—confession, celibacy of clergy, monasticism, transubstantiation, Papal infallibility, Lourdes water, and bits of semi-saintly bones in glass jars, as I have seen them in Paris convents, being too much for the patience of an honest and intelligent man who reads his Voltaire and his Renan. With your Protestant your case is different, be he German or English: the Reformation has got rid of all the things which would stink too manifestly in his nostrils; and he is just able to swallow (in an intellectual wafer which prevents his tasting it) the amount of nonsense the absorption of which is rewarded by a decent social position, or perhaps by a good living or a professorship; meanwhile he may nibble at Darwinism, Positivism, materialism, be quite the man of advanced thought; for, even if he be fully persuaded that the world was not created in six days, and consider Buddha and Socrates quite as divine as Christ, he will yet allow that the lower classes must not be too rudely disturbed in their belief of the story of the apple and its fatal consequences. And this merely because a parcel of men of the sixteenth century, without any scientific reasons for doubt and up to the ears in theology, chose to find that certain Romish dogmas and practices were intolerable to their reason and conscience; and therefore invented that disastrous *modus vivendi* with Semitic and mediæval notions which we call Protestantism. And then we men of the nineteenth century are expected to hold Luther and Calvin centenaries, to make fine speeches and write enthusiastic passages about them, and cry 'Long live religious toleration.' No, no; give me the Council of Trent, the Bull Unigenitus, Loyola, Lainez, and Pascal's Jesuits; give me Lourdes water and silver ex-votos, and slices of the pope's slipper, and Capuchins and Trappistes; give me Monsignore Russell, because in so doing you are giving me Voltaire and Diderot, and Michelet and Auguste Comte!"

"But," put in Vere, "you seem by your own account (for you know I don't regard Catholicism as you do, and I don't think it matters what a man believes as long as his belief suffices to his soul), to be buying the total emancipation of a few minds at the expense of the slavery and degradation of an enormous number of men. If Catholicism is so bad that no one who has the option will compromise with it, have you a right to prescribe it to the majority of mankind?"

"Progress, my dear Vere, exists only

in the minority. The majority may receive an improved position, but it cannot improve itself; so secure the freedom of the minority before thinking of anything else."

"That is all very well," answered Baldwin, who had been leaning upon the table, eagerly following Rheinhardt's words, and watching for an opportunity of interrupting him; "that's all very well as long as you go upon the supposition that the only thing of value in this world is scientific truth, and the only improvement which can be wished is the increased destruction of error. But there is something more valuable than scientific truth, and that is, the temper which cannot abet falsehood; there is something which it is more urgent to demolish and cart off than mere error, and that is, all the bad moral habits, the habit of relying on other folks' judgment, the habit of not sifting the evil from the good, the habit of letting one's self be moved instead of moving one's self, the habit of sanctifying low things with high names; all the habits of spiritual sloth, spiritual sybaritism, spiritual irresponsibility. In this is the real degradation, the real danger. And Protestantism, which you call a *modus vivendi* with falsehood, merely because the men of the sixteenth century rose up against only as much error as they themselves could discern, — Protestantism meant the refusal to abet falsehood and foulness, the effort to disentangle good from bad, to replace mysticism by morality; it meant moral and intellectual activity, and completeness, and manliness. It meant that in the sixteenth century; and, say what you will, it means that still nowadays. The men who arose against the Papacy in the time of Luther are naturally not the men who would still be mere Protestants in the days of Comte, and Darwin, and Spencer; as they preceded and dragged on their inferiors then, so they would seek to precede and drag on their inferiors now; they would be, what they were, pioneers of truth, clearers away of error. But those who are Protestants nowadays — that is to say, possess a religion expunged of the more irrational notions and demoralizing institutions of the Middle Ages, a religion less mythological and more ethical — but for the Reformation, would still be morally starving, and from starvation contracting all the loathsome moral diseases and degrading moral palsies which we observe in the Catholic forefathers before Luther, in their Catholic contemporaries of Spain, and Italy, and France.

The Reformation may have done nothing for the thinking minority, it may even, as Rheinhardt insists, have made that minority smaller, but to the small minority the Reformation gave a vast majority, which is not, as in Catholic countries, separated from it by an unbridgeable gulf. The number of completely emancipated minds may be less in Protestant countries; but behind them is a large number of minds which are yet far from being utterly cramped and maimed and impotent, which have not gone very far on the right road, but have not gone far on the wrong one; minds possessing at least rudimentary habits of inquiry, of discrimination, of secular morality, and which, little by little, may be influenced, improved, enfranchised, by those who are more fully developed and more completely free. This is what Protestantism has done for us; and the highest thing that we can do, is to follow in the steps of those first Protestants, to clear away what appears to be error in our eyes, as they cleared away what appeared to be error in theirs."

"The Reformation," persisted Rheinhardt calmly, "was a piece of intellectual socialism. It consisted in dividing truth so that each man might have a little scrap of it for himself, and in preventing all increase by abolishing all large intellectual capital."

"I have never doubted," remarked Vere, "that the Reformation was, for all the paradoxes of this Voltairean of ours, a most necessary and useful revolution. It swept away — and this is what I most regret — the last shreds of pagan purple, the last half-withered flowers of pagan fancy, out of Christianity, and left it a whitewashed utilitarian thing — a Methodist chapel, well ventilated and well warmed, but singularly like a railway waiting-room or a warehouse. But of course such a consideration can have no weight. Protestantism (excuse my confusion of metaphors) may be called the spiritual enfranchisement of the servile classes: it turned, as Baldwin says, a herd of slaves and serfs into well-to-do artisans and shopkeepers. I think, therefore, that Protestantism was an unmitigated blessing for what Rheinhardt calls the intellectual proletariat, for the people who neither increase intellectual wealth nor enjoy intellectual luxury. There is something as beautiful in the rough cleanness of belief of a Scotch or Swiss artisan as there is in a well-scoured deal table and a spotless homespun napkin; and I often have felt, talking with certain French,

Italian, and Austrian peasants, that, spiritually, they live in something between a drain and a cellar. So that, if I were a great landed proprietor, or a great manufacturer, or any other sort of modern leader of men, I should certainly feel bound to put every obstacle in the way of a conversion of my tenants and operatives by a man like Monsignore; I should feel as if they were going to sell their solid and well-drained cottages in order to live in mere mud cabins without drains and without chimneys. But when it comes to the upper classes, to those who have a certain secured intellectual life, the case would be different." And Vere puffed away at his pipe, as if he had settled the question.

"Really," cried Baldwin, "I don't see at all why you should be indifferent to the aristocracy of intellect (as Rheinhardt calls it) living in what you describe as a spiritual dwelling partaking of the cellar and of the drain."

"I am not indifferent," answered Vere, "but I see that a certain standard of intellectual and moral wealth having now been attained, there is not the faintest chance of a man living in a cellar or a drain. Given a certain amount of intelligence and culture, which one may nearly always assume among our educated classes, our spiritual dwellings are sure to be quite healthy enough; and I can't see, therefore, why each man should not be permitted to build his house to please his fancy, and fill it with whatever things may give him most pleasure. He is doing no harm to anybody, and no one has any right to interfere with him. Oh, I know you, Baldwin! you would be for forcing your way into a man's spiritual house and insisting (with a troupe of Positivistic policemen and sanitary inspectors at your heels) that every room must have a given number of cubic feet of air and a given number of windows, and that wall-papers must be made to wash, flowers be carefully restricted to the hot-house, and that an equal temperature, never rising much above the moral and intellectual freezing-point, should be kept up. Now, I happen to consider that this visit of yours, although most benevolent, would be a quite unjustifiable intrusion; and that you would not have the smallest right to tear down the curtains of a man who enjoys a subdued light, still less to pitch his flowers and incense-burners out of his bedroom window. Joking apart, I think there is no greater mistake than to interfere with the beliefs of people who belong to

a class which has secured quite enough spiritual freedom; let them satisfy their own nature, and remember that the imaginative and emotional wants, the spiritual enjoyments of each man, are different from those of his neighbor —"

"That is exactly my view," put in Rheinhardt: "let the imbeciles keep out of my way, and I certainly won't get into theirs. Let us enjoy our own intellectual ambrosia, and leave them to their beer and porridge, which they think every bit as nice;" and he threw his cigarette into the fire.

"I understand," said Baldwin, overlooking Rheinhardt's remark, and addressing himself directly to Vere, "according to you the class which possesses the highest intellectual life, has, like the governing social body, a right and an obligation to interfere in the spiritual mode of life of such classes as might, if left to themselves, become a public nuisance."

"That is rather a hard way of putting it," answered Vere, "but such, in the main, is my principle."

"You wish your lower classes to be Protestant for the same reason that you would wish your lower classes to live in sanitary-regulation houses, because a condition of spiritual darkness and dirt would produce nasty spiritual diseases, which might spread to your upper class, and would at all events fill the streets with sights and smells quite unendurable to your upper class, which is of course as æsthetical as it is humane. The unfortunate hardworking creatures who save us from manual labor must be looked after and taught how to be decent, spiritually as well as physically, both for their own sake and for ours. So far I completely follow your ideas. But I confess my inability to follow, in the sense of understanding its justifiableness, the rest of your theory. From your manner of speaking, and your allusion to men building their spiritual homes to suit their fancy, and excluding the light and scenting the air as they please, I presume that in your opinion a man who has inherited the means of living in leisure, untroubled by the necessity of earning his bread or of liberating his conscience (his ancestors having given their labor and their blood for that), need think of nothing beyond making his life as agreeable as possible to himself."

"I wonder, Baldwin, you can be so grotesque as to suppose that I am an advocate of anything of the sort," interrupted Vere rather angrily.

"Why not?" asked Rheinhardt, "'tis the height of wisdom; and for that reason, indeed, cannot be your idea, Vere."

"You are not an advocate of this theory when applied by fashionable numskulls, certainly, my dear Vere. Of the men who think of nothing but enjoying themselves by eating dinners at a guinea a head, sitting up till six in the morning in ballrooms or playing cards at the club, driving four-in-hand, and having wives dressed out by Wörth and collections of bad pictures and apocryphal *bric-à-brac*; of such men, or rather beings, you have as bad an opinion as myself. Indeed, I dare say, you have a considerably worse one than I have, because I am always ready to admit that the poor devils whom we revile as the corrupt of the world, are in reality acting for the best according to their lights, being totally unable to conceive of a higher mode of existence or a more glorious destiny. But the case changes when a man's leisure consists not merely in his no longer being required to earn his bread, but in no longer requiring to free his mind from the painful restrictions and necessities of former days; when his inherited wealth consists not merely in estates and cash, but in intellect and knowledge. What are we to think of this new sort of favorite of fortune, if he employ that intellectual leisure and those intellectual riches merely in feeding his mind with exotic spiritual dainties (among which, even as with the more material epicure, rottenness constitutes a great attraction); in playing games of chance with his own beliefs and emotions; in bedecking himself and attitudinizing in the picturesque rags and tags of effete modes of feeling and antiquated modes of thought, because he enjoys making himself look interesting, and enjoys writing sonnet sketches of his poor maimed and crippled soul decked out in becoming purple, and gray and saffron and sad green of paganism, and asceticism, and Baudelaireism, and Schopenhauerism; what shall we say of the man who does this, while nine-tenths of his fellow-men are slaving at mechanical labor; who refuses to employ his leisure and his powers in doing that other kind of work without which mankind cannot exist, the work of sowing and grinding the grain which must make the spiritual bread of the world? To me it seems as if this man were but a subtler and less conscious robber; keeping in barren mortmain, even as the clergy before the Revolution kept the fruitful acres of France, that which ought to keep and strengthen

and support a thousand morally starving and anæmic wretches."

"What!" interrupted Rheinhardt, "a man is not to enjoy his own intellectual advantages, but must consider himself the steward of all the imbeciles, *proletaires*, and paupers of the intellectual world! This is Socialism, my good Baldwin, of the rankest and most intolerable description!"

"It may be Socialism to you, Rheinhardt, and it may be a private pet Socialism of my own; but it has nothing to do with what other folks call Socialism, which defeats not only its own, but still more my own object. Understand me rightly — all progress (and I think you will have to agree with me), all diminution of misery and increase of happiness, is in direct proportion to the utilization of the various sorts of capital — physical, intellectual, and moral — land, money, muscles, brains, hearts, which we possess; and the more we put our capital to profit, the more do we enable the putting to profit of such capital as has lain dormant; hence progress must increase at a constantly greater ratio. For instance, think of all the energies of mind and heart and hand which must have been wasted in the cast-civilizations and in the feudal system; think of all the precious qualities which must be wasted nowadays owing to the still imperfect exchange of individuals among the various classes of society, which may keep a man with a great financial endowment making bad tables and chairs, and a man with a genius for carpentering ruining his partners with imbecile speculation."

"That is very true," remarked Vere; "but," he added, not perhaps without a touch of satisfaction in his voice, as if unconsciously pleased at any want of connection in Baldwin's ideas, "I don't see that these remarks, however interesting, have much to do with your onslaught on the poor mortals who venture to retain doubts and habits and love of old faiths which your philosophy happens to condemn."

"They have everything to do with each other, since one is but the other's logical consequence. Rheinhardt has just called me a Socialist; well, I don't think you would get many Socialists to agree in my belief that all progress depends upon the existence of a class quite above all necessity of manual labor and business routine, which, while the majority of men are keeping the world going by supplying its most pressing bodily wants, may separate the true from the false, and gradually substi-

tute higher aims and enjoyments for lower ones; in short, do the work of improvement, if not by actually discovering new truth, or even by promulgating it, at least by storing it ready for need."

"All improvement must come from the minority," remarked Rheinhardt, "since improvement means the development of special and rare advantages."

"In short," went on Baldwin, "I hope for a fair division of labor between the upper and lower classes, the one working for the other, and neither idle. Of course, this is but a distant ideal, itself possible only as the result of infinite progress; still, it is clear that we are tending that way. At present the great proportion of what we call the upper classes are quite incapable of any work that could not be performed by the lower; their leisure is, and must be, mere idleness. But, as I said just now, within the upper classes there is an upper class; the men who can originate, or at least appreciate, thought, the nucleus of my real upper class of the future. These have not merely leisure, but also the faculties to render it profitable; and their leisure, as I said before, means not only that they have been saved the trouble of supplying bodily wants, but also, which is much more important, that they have been saved the trouble of riding themselves of so many erroneous modes of thought which are still heaped up in the path of the inferior classes. This is the class of men whom you, Vere, say we have no right to interfere with; who, as we may be sure that they won't elect to live in cellars and drains, ought to be permitted to build their spiritual dwellings in accordance with their own fancy, and to fill them with whatsoever mental and moral *bric-à-brac* and stage property may give them most pleasure, turn them into little pleasure palaces of the 'Imitation of Christ,' the 'Positive Philosophy,' or the 'Fleurs du Mal' style of spiritual decoration. With the unfortunate rich numskull, too stupid to do intellectual work, too stupid to know that there is any to do; too helpless to have responsibilities; with him I can have patience, I can even sympathize. But with this other man who has not only leisure and education, but intellect and conscience, I have no patience, I have only indignation; and it is to this man that I would say: 'What right have you to arrange your spiritual house merely to please your fancy or your laziness? What right have you to curtail out the intellectual light from eyes which are required to see for

others as well as for yourself? What right have you to enervate with mystical drugs the moral muscle, which must clean out not your own conscience merely, but the conscience of others? Above all, what right have you to bring up in this spiritual dwelling of your fancy, in this confusing penumbra, and amid these emasculating fumes those for whose souls you are most responsible, your children; that not only your mind and heart but theirs should be mere waste and vanity for all the world?"

Baldwin had gradually grown earnest and excited; and what had been at first but an abstract discussion, became, as the thought burned stronger within him, almost a personal attack; in speaking the last words he had risen from his chair, and instinctively fixed his eyes on Vere, where he sat in the dusk of the twilight room.

The latter did not look up; he knocked the ashes out of his pipe and remained seated, watching the smouldering fire. There was a moment's silence, during which the ticking of the clock and the cackling of the poultry outside were painfully distinct.

"If there is a thing I detest," muttered Rheinhardt, "it is the militant, humanitarian atheist; no priest ever came up to him for spoiling a pleasant chat." He felt that the discussion had long ceased to be academic; and to him who engaged in controversy as a sort of æsthetic pleasure, nothing could be more utterly distasteful than a discussion taken too much in earnest. He suddenly broke the silence by exclaiming, —

"Just look what an odd sky."

The room was by this time getting rapidly dark, so that Rheinhardt, who was at bottom the most sympathizing of men, could feel rather than see the excited face of Baldwin, the gentle and melancholy, but slightly ironical, just a little pained, expression of Vere. In the midst of the duskiest the window blazed out white and luminous, with the sash-bars, the stems and leaves of the flowers, the bushes outside, the distant firs and larches bounding, the common sharp and black against a strange white light. He stepped into the garden.

"Do come out," he cried, "and look at this preposterous sunset; it is worthy the attention of æsthetical creatures like you, and Vere may write a fine splash-dash description of it."

The two men rose, and followed Rheinhardt out into the garden, and thence on

to the road, which wound behind the stables and hayricks of the old farm. Before them was a sea of gently undulating hillocks, steeped in a broad and permeating white light, the mere consciousness of which, as it were, dazzled and dazed. A brilliant light which seemed to sink out of the landscape all its reds and yellows, and with them all life; bleaching the yellowing cornfields and brown heath; but burnishing into demoniac energy of color the pastures and oak woods, brilliant against the dark sky as if filled with green fire. Along the roadside the poppies, which an ordinary sunset makes flame, were quite extinguished, like burnt-out embers; the yellow hearts of the daisies were quite lost, merged into their shining white petals. And, striking against the windows of the old black and white checkered farm (a ghastly skeleton in this light) it made them not flare, nay, not redden in the faintest degree, but reflect a brilliant speck of white light. Everything was unsubstantial, yet not as in a mist; nay, rather substantial, but flat, as if cut out of paper and pasted on, the black branches and green leaves, the livid, glaring houses, with roofs of dead, scarce perceptible red (as when an iron turning white-hot from red-hot in the stithy, grows also dull and dim). The various ranges of hills projecting beyond each other like side-scenes covered with uniform gray; the mass of trees toward the distant downs, bleached white against the white sky, smoke-like, without consistence; while the fields of green barley and ripening wheat trembled, and almost vibrated with a white, white-hot light.

"It looks like the eve of the coming of Antichrist, as described in mediæval hymns," remarked Vere; "the sun, before setting never more to rise, sucking all life out of the earth, leaving it but a mound of livid cinders, barren and crumbling, through which the buried nations will easily break their way when they arise."

Baldwin had no intention of resuming their discussion, but to his surprise, and Rheinhardt's annoyance, Vere himself returned to the subject of their former conversation. As they were slowly walking home, watching the strange whiteness gradually turning into the gray of twilight, he said, as he passed his arm through Baldwin's, —

"My dear Baldwin, I see very plainly that you think you may have hurt my feelings, and that you are sorry for it. But don't worry yourself about that, because

you haven't really done so. I am, excuse my saying so, sufficiently your elder, not merely in years, I think, but in experience of the world, to understand perfectly that to you everything seems very simple and obvious in this world, and that you haven't had time to find out how difficult it is to know right from wrong. It seems to you that you have written me down, or rather have compelled me to write myself down, a selfish and cowardly wretch; and you are sorry for me now that it should have happened; nay, don't try to deny it. But I know very well that I am nothing of the sort; and I can understand your position sufficiently to understand why you think me so; and also, considering your point of view, to like you all the better for your indignation. But tell me, has it never struck you, whose philosophy consists in checking the waste of all the good and useful things in the world—has it never occurred to you to ask yourself whether you may not, in this instance, be wasting, ruthlessly scattering to the four winds of heaven, something quite as precious as this leisure to think and this power of thought of which you make so much—wasting a certain proportion of the little happiness which mankind has got?"

"I don't hardly see what you are driving at, Vere," answered Baldwin, pushing open the wicket which separated the farmyard from the common.

"The happiness of mankind—that is to say, of the only part of mankind worth taking into account," put in Rheinhardt, with a malicious pleasure in intruding his own jogtrot philosophy among what he considered the dreams of his two friends, "depends upon its being able to discuss abstract questions without getting red in the face, and telling people that they are vile."

"There is some truth in that also," laughed Vere, "but that was not in my mind. What I mean is this: has it never occurred to you that instead of increasing the happiness of mankind, as you intend doing by insisting that every one who can should seek for the truth in spiritual matters, you would in reality be diminishing that happiness by destroying beliefs or half beliefs, which afford infinite comfort and consolation and delight to a large number of men and women?"

"I have never doubted," answered Baldwin, somewhat bitterly, "that it must have been very distressing for the French nobles to have their domains confiscated in the Revolution, and for the poor, elegant, chivalrous planters to have their

negroes emancipated for them. Still, such distressing things have to be done occasionally."

"You misunderstand me again," answered Vere, "and you might know better than to continue fancying that I am a kind of spiritual æsthetic or sybarite. The universe, as religion shows it, is not really true with the universe as it really exists; but in many cases it is much more beautiful and consoling. What I mean is this: since at the bottom of the Pandora's box which has been given to mankind, and out of which have issued so many cruel truths, there exists the faculty of disbelieving in some of them, of trusting in good where there is only evil, in imagining sympathy where there is indifference, and justice where there is injustice, of hoping where there is room only to despair—since this inestimable faculty of self-delusion exists, why not let mankind enjoy it, why wish to waste, to rob them of this, their most precious birth-right?"

"Because," answered Baldwin, "increasing truth is the law of increasing good; because if we elect to believe that which we wish instead of believing that which is, we are deliberately degrading our nature, rendering it less excellent and useful, instead of more so, than it was; and because by being too cowardly to admit that which is, we are incapacitating ourselves, misleading, and weakening others, in the great battle to make the kingdom of that which is into the kingdom of that which should be."

"I leave you to fight out your objective and subjective worlds," said Rheinhardt, taking up a book and settling himself by the lamp.

Vere was silent for a moment. "Every one," he said, "is not called upon to battle in life. Many are sent in to whom it might be merely a tolerably happy journey. What right have we to insist upon telling these things which will poison their happiness, and which will not, perhaps, make them any the more useful? You were speaking about the education of children, and this, which to you is a source of bitterness and reproach, has been to me the subject of much doubt and indecision. And I have come to the conclusion that I have no right to take it for granted that my children will necessarily be put in such positions as to require their knowing the things of which I, alas! have had the bitter certainty; that should such a position be awaiting them, disbelief in all the beautiful and consoling fictions of reli-

gion will come but too soon, and that I have no right to make such disbelief come any earlier."

"In short you deliberately teach your children things in which you disbelieve?"

Vere hesitated. "I teach them nothing; their mother is a firm believer, and I leave the children's religious instruction entirely in her hands. I have never," he added with some pride, "made the slightest attempt to undermine my wife's belief; and shall not act differently toward my children."

Baldwin fixed his eyes searchingly upon Vere. "Have you ever really cared much about your wife, Vere?" he asked.

"I married her for love; and I think that even now, I care more for her than for any one else in the world. Why do you ask?"

"Because," answered Baldwin, "it is perfectly inconceivable to me that, if you really love your wife as I should love a wife if I took one, not as my mere squaw, or odalisque, or as the mother of my children, but, as you say, more than any one else in the world, you can endure that there should exist a subject, the greatest and most solemn in all the world, upon which you and your wife keep your thoughts and feelings secret from each other."

"I have friends, — men, with whom I can discuss it."

"And you can bear to be able to open your whole soul to a friend, while keeping it closed to the person whom you say you love best in the world? You can bear to feel that to your highest thoughts and hopes and fears there is a response in a man, like me, scarcely more than a stranger to you, while there is only blindness and dumbness in this woman who is constantly by your side, and to whom you are more than the whole world? Do you consider this as complete union with another, this deliberate silence and indifference, this growing and changing and maturing of your own mind, while you see her mind cramped and maimed by beliefs which you have long cast behind you?"

"I love my wife, and I respect her belief."

"You may abet her belief, Vere, but if, as you say, you consider it mere error and falsehood, you cannot respect it."

"I respect my wife's happiness, then, and my children's happiness; and for that reason I refrain from laying rough hands upon illusions which are part of that happiness. Accident has brought me into

contact with what you, and I, call truth. I have been shorn of my belief; I am emancipated, free, superior — all the things which a thorough materialist is in the eyes of materialists; but," and Vere turned round upon Baldwin with a look of pity and bitterness, "I have not yet attained to the perfection of being a hypocrite, a sophist to myself, of daring to pretend to my own soul that this belief of ours, this truth, is not bitter and abominable, arid and icy to our hearts."

Rheinhardt looked up from his book with a curious expression of wonder. "But, my dear friend," he said, very quietly, "why should the truth be abominable to you? A certain number of years employed as honorably and happily as possible, and after that, what preceded this life of yours; what more would you wish, and what evil is there in this that you should shrink from teaching it to your children? I am not afraid of death; why should you be?"

"You misunderstand me," answered Vere; "Heaven knows I am not afraid of death — nay, more than once it has seemed to me that to lie down and feel my soul, like my body, grow gradually numb and number, till it was chilled out of all consciousness, would be the greatest of joys. The horror of the idea of annihilation is, I think, to all save Claudios, the horror not of our own annihilation but of the annihilation of others; this Schopenhauer overlooked, as you do, Rheinhardt, when he comfortably argued that after all we should not know whether we were being annihilated or not, that as long as we ourselves are awake we cannot realize sleep, and that we need only say to ourselves, 'Well, I shall sleep, be unconscious, never wake.' In this there is no horror. But Schopenhauer did not understand, having no heart, that death is the one who robs us, who takes away the beloved, leaves us with empty arms. The worst of death is not the annihilation of ourselves; oh, no, that is nothing; no, nor even the blank numbness of seeing the irremediable loss; it is the sickening, gasping terror, coming by sudden unexpected starts, of foreseeing that which will inevitably be. Poets have said a great deal, especially Leopardi, of love and death being brothers, of the desire of the one coming along with the presence of the other; it may be so. But this much is certain, that whatever may be said of the brotherhood of love and death, love, in its larger and nobler sense, is the wizard who has evoked for us the *fata morgana*

of an after life; it is love who has taught the world, for its happiness, that there is not an endless ocean beyond this life, an ocean without shores, dark, silent, whose waters steam up in black vapors to the black heavens, a rolling chaos of disintegrated thoughts and feelings, all separate, all isolated, heaving up and down in the shapeless eternal flood. It is love who has taught us that what has been begun here will not forever be interrupted, nor what has been ill done forever remain unatoned; that the affection once kindled will never cease, that the sin committed can be wiped out, and the good conceived can be achieved; that the seed sown in life will yet bloom and fructify in death, that it will not have been cast too late upon an evil soil, and the blossom of promise will not forever have been nipped, the half-ripe fruit not forever have fallen from the tree; that all within which is good and happy, and forever struggling here, virtue, genius, will be free to act hereafter; that the creatures thrust asunder in the world, vainly trying to clasp one another in the crowd forever pushing them apart, may unite forever. All this is the wonderful phantasmagoria of love; love has given it to mankind. What right have we to sweep it away; we"—and Vere turned reproachfully toward Baldwin—"who have perhaps never loved, and never felt the want of such a belief?"

Baldwin was silent for a moment, then answered, as he struck a shower of sparks out of the dull red embers,—

"I have never actually had such a belief, but I have experienced what it is to want it. I was brought up without any religious faith, with only a few general notions of right and wrong; and when I first began to read and to think for myself, my ideas naturally moved in a rationalistic, nay, a materialistic path, so that when in the course of my boyish readings I came upon disputes about an after life, it seemed to me quite impossible to conceive that there could be one. When I was very young I became engrossed in artistic and archæological subjects: it seemed to me that the only worthy interest in life was the beautiful; and, in my Olympian narrowness of sympathy, people who worried themselves about other questions seemed to me poor, morbid, mediæval wretches. You see, I led a life of great solitude, and great though narrow happiness, shut up among books, and reading only such of them as favored my perfect serenity of mind. But little by

little I got to know other men, and to know somewhat more of the world; then things began gradually to change. I began to perceive the frightful dissonances in the world, the horrible false notes, the abominable harmonies of good and evil; and to meet all this I had only this kind of negative materialism, which could not suffice to give me peace of mind, but which entirely precluded my accepting any kind of theory of spiritual compensation and ultimate justice; I grew uneasy, and then unhappy. Just at that moment it so happened that I lost a friend of mine to whom I was considerably attached, whose life had been quite singularly unfortunate, indeed appeared to be growing a little happier only a few months before his death. It was the first time that death came near me and close before my eyes. It gave me a frightful moral shock, not so much perhaps the loss of that particular individual to myself as the sense of the complete extinction of his personality, gone like the snuffed-out flame or the spent foam of the sea, gone completely, nowhere, leaving no trace, occupying no other place, become the past, the past for which we can do nothing."

Rheinhardt had put down his book for a moment, and listened, with a puzzled and wondering look. That people should be haunted by thoughts like these seemed to him almost as incomprehensible as that the dead should arise and join in a ghastly dance round the gravestones; nor would this latter phenomenon have seemed to him much the more disgusting of the two; so, after a minute, he settled down again and pulled out of his pocket a volume of Aristophanes.

"You have felt all this, Baldwin," said Vere, "and you would nevertheless deliberately inflict such pain upon others? You have felt all the misery of disbelief in a future life, and you are surprised that I should be unwilling to meddle with the belief of my wife and children?"

"I am surprised at your not being almost involuntarily forced into communicating what you know to be the truth; surprised that, in your mind, there should not be an imperious sense that truth must out. Moreover, I think that the responsibility of holding back truth is always greater than any man can calculate, or any man, could he know the full consequences thereof, could support. We have been speaking of the moral discomfort attendant upon a disbelief in a future life; a moral discomiort, which, say what we

may, is nowadays only momentary, does not outlive our first grief at death, for we moderns have not a very vital belief in a future state. Well, we ought also to think of what was the state of things when such a belief thoroughly existed, when what you call the phantasmagoria of love was a reality; bring up to your memory the way in which the mystics of the Middle Ages, and, indeed, the mystics of all times, have spoken of life — as a journey during which the soul must neither plow nor sow, but walk on, its eyes fixed upon heaven, despising the earth which it left barren and bitter as when it came. "*Servate tanquam peregrinum et hospitium super terram, ad quem nihil spectat de mundi negotiis,*" that is what the "*Imitation*" bids us do. Ask yourself which is the more conducive to men making the world endurable to others and themselves, to men weighing their wishes and thoughts, and bridling their desires, and putting out all their strength for good, — the notion that there is a place beyond the grave where all is perfect, where all sloth and unkindness, and repeated folly and selfishness may be expiated and retrieved; or the notion that whatever excellence there can be, man must make with his own hands, that whatever good may be done, whatever may be felt, repaired, atoned for, must be done, felt, repaired, and atoned for in this world. Even were I logically convinced of the existence of a future life, I should be bound to admit the enervating effect thereof on our sense of responsibility and power of action. I should regret the terrible moral tonic of the knowledge that whatever of good I may do must be done at once, whatever of evil I have done, be effaced at once also. But let this be, and answer me, Vere, do you believe that a single individual has a right to hide from others that which he believes to be the truth? Do you seriously consider that a man is doing right in destroying, for the sake of the supposed happiness of his children, the spark of truth which happens to be in his power, and which belongs neither to him nor to his children, but to the whole world? Can you assert that it is honest on your part, in order to save your children the pain of knowing that they will not meet you, or their mother, or their dead friends again in heaven, to refuse to give them that truth for which your ancestors have paid with their blood and their liberty, and which your children are bound to hand on to their children, in order that this little spark of truth may

grow into a fire which shall warm and light the whole world?"

"There is something more at stake than the mere happiness or unhappiness of my children," answered Vere, "at all events than such happiness as they might get from belief in an after life. There is the happiness, the safety of their conscience."

"Do you think you can save their conscience by sacrificing your own?"

"I should not be sacrificing my conscience were I doing that which I felt bound to do, Baldwin. Would you have me teach my children that this world, which they regard as the kingdom of a just and loving God, whose supremest desire is the innocence and happiness of his creatures, is in reality the battle-field or the playground of physical forces, without thought or conscience; nay, much worse, is the creation either of a principle of good perpetually allying itself to a principle of evil, or of a dreadful unity which permits and furthers good and evil alike? What would you think of me were I to tell my children that all that they had learned of God and Christ is falsehood; and that the true gods of the world are the serenely heartless, the foully bloodthirsty gods of early Greece, of Phœnicia, and Asia Minor? You would certainly think me a bad father. Yet this old mythology represents with marvellous accuracy the purely scientific view of the world, the impression given by the mere contemplation of nature, with its conflicting and caballing divinities, good and bad, black and white, resisting and assisting one another, beneficent and wicked, pure and filthy by turns. The chaos, the confusion, the utter irresponsibility, which struck the framers of old myths, is still there. All these stories seem to us very foolish and very horrible: an omniscient, omnipotent Zeus, threatened by a mysterious, impersonal Fate, looming dimly behind him; a Helios who ripens the crops and ripens the pestilence; a Cybele forever begetting and suckling and mutilating; we laugh at all this. But with what do we replace it? And if we look at our prosaic modern nature, as is shown us by science, can we accuse the chaotic and vicious fancy of those early explainers of it? Do we not see in this nature bounty and cruelty greater than that of any early gods, combats more blind than any Titan's battles, marriages of good and evil more hideous than any incests of the old divinities, monster births of excellence and baseness more foul than any Centaur or

Minotaur; and do we not see the great gods of the universe sitting and eating the flesh of men, not unconsciously, but consciously, serenely, and without rebuke?"

"That's a curious observation of yours," put in Rheinhardt; "but it would appear as if there had been a difference between the two generations; that with the Semitic the feeling of right and wrong, of what ought or ought not to be in the abstract, entirely overshadows mere direct perception, scientific perception of nature, and considers all phenomena, not with respect to their necessity, but with reference to their ethical propriety; while, as you remark, the Aryan race ——"

But Rheinhardt's generalizations were altogether wasted upon his two friends.

"Such is nature," pursued Vere, with impetuosity; "and in it you scientific minds bid us to seek for moral peace and moral safety. How can we aspire, as to the ideal of moral goodness, to that which produces evil — ineffable, inevitable evil? How measure our moral selves against this standard; how blush before this unblushing god? How dare we look for consolation where our moral sense, if enlightened, must force us to detest and to despise? Where, then, shall we seek the law, the rule by which to govern our lives? And the horror of horrors lies in this — that we are forced to conceive as evil all that which is at variance with the decrees of nature, of this same nature which is forever committing evil greater than any of us could commit, — herein, that we cannot rebel. As long as nature meant the Devil, it might be opposed; but we know that for us there can be no good save in obeying nature — obeying that which is not good in itself; it has, as if with intentional malice, forced us to bend, to walk in its ways; if we refuse solidarity with it, we are sucked into a worse evil still. The sight of individual misfortune can never bring home this horrible anomaly as does a study of the way in which whole peoples have been sacrificed first to sin, then to expiation; of the manner in which every rebellion against this evil-polluted nature, every attempt of man to separate himself, to live by a rule of purity of his own, has been turned into a source of new abominations. Am I to show all this to my children, and say to them: Only nature is good; and nature is the evillest thing that we can conceive, since it forces to do evil and then punishes. Would a belief in Ashtaroth or Moloch not be as moral as this one?"

Baldwin waited till Vere had come to an end.

"I can quite understand all that you feel, because I have felt it myself," he said, unshaken by his friend's vehemence.

"I was telling you of the terrible depression which gradually came over me as I perceived what the world really was; and which for a couple of years at least, made me live in constant moral anguish, especially after the death of that friend of mine had, as I told you, brought home to me how the disbelief in a future life took away the last possibility of believing in a just and merciful Providence. I revolved in my mind every possible scheme for conciliating the evil inherent in the world with our desire for good. Christianity, Buddhism, Positivism, they all assumed to quiet our conscience with the same hollow lie; Positivism saying that the time would come when nature and good would be synonymous; Christianity reminding us that man may have but a moment wherein to become righteous, while God has all eternity; always the same answer, the evil permitted or planned in the past is to be compensated by the good in the future, agony suffered is to be repaid in happiness, either to the worn-out, broken soul in another world, or to the old, worn-out humanity in this. Such answers made me but the more wretched by their obvious futility: How efface the indelible? can God himself undo the accomplished, cancel that which has been committed and suffered? Can the God of religion, with his after-death, Paradise joys, efface the reality of the agonies endured upon earth? Can the inconceivable of Positivism efface with the happiness of the men of the twentieth century the misery of the men of the nineteenth? Can good cause evil in the same individual, — the warmth and honor of the old man cancel the starvation and cold and despair of the youth? Can evil suffered be blotted out, and evil committed be erased? Forgiven perhaps; but effaced, taken from out of the register of the things that have been, never. This plea of the future, whether in this world or another, what is it, but a half hour which the mercy of man gives to his God wherein to repent and amend and reprieve; a half hour of centuries indeed, but a half hour none the less in eternity, and to expiate the evil done in a lifetime of infinitude?"

"What is the use of going on like that?" said Rheinhardt; "why cannot you two be satisfied with the infinite wickedness of mankind, without adding thereunto the

wickedness of nature? As Wolfram von Eschenbach remarked already six centuries ago, 'Ihr nöthigt Gott nichts ab durch Zorn,' try and reform man, but leave God alone. But in truth all such talk is a mere kind of rhetorical exercise, brought into fashion by Schopenhauer, who would have been horrified at the waste of time and words for which he is responsible."

"We shall certainly not make nature repent and reform by falling foul of her," answered Vere; "but at all events, by protesting against evil, however inevitable, we shall prevent ourselves being degraded into passive acceptance of it."

"I was going to say," went on Baldwin, "that I went through all these phases of moral wretchedness. And while they lasted, the temptation to have done with them, to free myself by a kind of intellectual suicide, was constantly pursuing me; it seemed as if every person I spoke with, every book that I opened, kept repeating to me, 'Disbelieve in your reason, and believe in your heart; that which may be impossible to your logic, may yet be possible to God's goodness.' It seemed to me as if I would give everything to be permitted to lay down my evil convictions, to shut my intellectual eyes, to fall into spiritual sleep, to dream—to be permitted to dream those beautiful dreams which consoled other men, and never again to wake up to the dreadful reality. But I saw that to do so would be mean and cowardly; I forced myself to keep awake in that spiritual cold, to see things plainly, and trudge quietly forward upon that bleak and hideous road. Instead of letting myself believe, I forced myself to doubt and examine all the more; I forced myself to study all the subjects which seemed as if they must make my certainty of evil only stronger and stronger. I instinctively hated science, because science had destroyed my belief in justice and mercy; I forced myself, for a while, to read only scientific books. Well, I was rewarded. Little by little it dawned upon me that all my misery had originated in a total misconception of the relative positions of nature and of man; I began to perceive that the distinction between right and wrong conduct had arisen in the course of the evolution of mankind, that right and wrong meant only that which was conducive or detrimental to the increasing happiness of humanity, that they were referable only to human beings in their various relations with one another; that it was impossible

to explain them, except with reference to human society, and that to ask for moral aims and moral methods of mere physical forces, which had no moral qualities, and which were not subject to social relations, or to ask for them of any Will hidden behind those forces, and who was equally independent of those human and social necessities which alone accounted for a distinction between right and wrong, was simply to expect one set of phenomena from objects which could only present a wholly different set of phenomena: to expect sound to be recognized by the eye, and light and color to be perceived by the ear. In short, I understood that man was dissatisfied and angry with nature, only because he had accustomed himself to think of nature as only another man like himself, liable to human necessities, placed in human circumstances, and capable, therefore, of human virtues and vices, and that I had been in reality no wiser than the fool who flew into a rage with the echo, or the child who strikes the table against which it has hurt itself."

"I see," said Vere bitterly, "your moral cravings were satisfied by discovering that nature was not immoral, because nature had never heard of morality. It appears not to have struck you that this utterly neutral character of nature, this placid indifference to right and wrong, left man in a dreadful moral solitude; and might make him doubt whether, since morality did not exist for nature, it need exist at all; whether, among all these blind physical forces, he too might not be a mere blind physical force."

"On the contrary," answered Baldwin, "when I came to understand why morality was not a necessity for nature, I also understood why morality was a necessity for man; the rule of the road, the rule that each coachman must take a particular side of the street with reference to other coachmen, could certainly not exist before the existence of streets and of carriages being driven along them; but without that rule of the road, gradually established by the practice of drivers, one carriage would merely smash into another, and the thoroughfare be hopelessly blocked. Thus it has been with morality. Rules of the road are unnecessary where there are neither roads nor carriages; and morality would be unnecessary, indeed inconceivable, where there are no human interests in collision; morality, I now feel persuaded, is the exclusive and essential qualification of the movements of an assemblage of men, as distinguished

from an assemblage of stones, or plants, or beasts, the qualification of man's relation, not with unsentient things, but with sentient creatures. Why go into details? You know that the school of philosophy to which I adhere has traced all distinctions of right and wrong to the perceptions, enforced upon man by mankind, and upon mankind by man, of the difference between such courses as are conducive to the higher development and greater happiness of men, and such other courses as are conducive only to their degradation and extinction. Such a belief, so far from leaving me in moral solitude, and making me doubt of my own moral nature, brings home to me that I am but a drop in the great moral flood called progress; that my own morality is but a result of the morality of millions of other creatures who have preceded me and surround me now; that my morality is an essential contribution to the morality of millions of creatures who will come after me; that on all sides, the more society develops, there is a constantly increasing intricacy of moral connection between the present, the past, and the future. If I refuse to press on in the ranks of good, there will be so much the less havoc made in the ranks of evil; if I fall, those on either side of me will be less united and less vigorous to resist, those following after me will stumble; I must therefore keep in my place, be borne by the current mass of moral life, instead of being passed over and trampled by it."

Vere did not answer. He looked vaguely toward the window, at the ghostly billows of the downs, dark blue, bleak, unsubstantial, under the bright, cold, windy sky. The wind had risen, and went moaning round the farm, piping shrilly in all its chinks and crannies, and making a noise as of distant waters in the firs of the common. Suddenly in the midst of the silence within doors, there came from the adjoining room a monotonous trickle or dribble of childish voice, going on breathless, then halting suddenly exhausted, but with uniform regularity.

"It is Willie reading the Bible to his grandmother," remarked Rheinhardt; "the old lady is left at home with him on Sunday evenings, while her husband goes to the village. It is a curious accompaniment to your and Baldwin's pessimistic groanings and utilitarian jubulations."

"I think," remarked Baldwin, after a moment's fruitless listening to catch the words from next door, "I think in some matters we unbelievers might take a les-

son from our neighbors. I was very much struck to-day, while listening to Monsignore's sermon, with the thought that that man feels it his duty to teach others that which he believes to be the truth, and that we do not."

"It is a priest's profession to preach, my dear Baldwin," put in Rheinhardt; "he lives by it, lives off his own preaching and off the preaching of all the other priests that live now or ever have lived."

"We unbelievers — I should rather say we believers in the believable" — answered Baldwin, "should all of us be, in a fashion, priests. You say that Monsignore lives off his own preaching and the preaching of all Catholic priests that ever have been. Well; and do we not live spiritually, do we not feed our soul upon the truth which we ourselves can find, upon the truth which generations of men have accumulated for us? If, in the course of time, there be no more priests in the world, I mean in the old sense, it will be that every man will be a priest for his own family, and every man of genius a priest for the whole of mankind. What I was thinking of just now is this: that this Monsignore, whom we consider a sort of clever deluded fool, and this old peasant woman, whose thoughts scarcely go beyond her village, are impressed with the sense of the responsibility incurred by the possession of what they consider superior truth — the responsibility of not keeping that truth to themselves, but participating it with others; and that herein they both of them assume a position far wiser, far more honest, far nobler, than do we unbelievers, who say, 'What does it matter if others know only error, as long as ourselves know truth?'"

"You forget," answered Rheinhardt, "that both Monsignore and our landlady are probably persuaded that unless they share their spiritual knowledge with their neighbors, they will be responsible for the souls of those neighbors. And if you remember what may, in the opinion of the orthodox, happen to the souls of those persons who have been slightly neglected in their religious education, I think you will admit that there is plenty to feel responsible about."

"You mean that there is nothing for us to feel responsible about. Not so. Whatever may happen to the souls of our fellows will indeed not happen in an after-world, nor will they suffer in a physical hell of Dante, or enjoy themselves in a physical Paradise of Mahomet. But there is, nevertheless, for the souls which we

know, for the souls which look up to us for instruction and assistance, a hell. A hell of moral doubt and despair and degradation, a hell where there is fire enough to scorch the most callous, and ice enough to numb the warmest, and mud to clog and bedraggle the most noble among us. Yes. There is a hell in the moral world, and there is heaven, and there is God; the heaven of satisfied conscience, the God of our own aspirations; and from this heaven, from the sight of this God, it is in our power to exclude those most beloved by us. Shut them out because we have not the courage to see them shiver and wince one moment in the cold and the light of truth; shut them out and leave them to wander in a world of phantoms, upon the volcano crust of that hell of moral disbelief, unaware of its existence, or, aware too late, too suddenly of the crater opening beneath their feet. That old woman in the next room is teaching, feels bound to teach, her child the things which she looks upon as truth. And shall a man like you, Vere, refuse to teach your children what you know to be true? Will you leave them to believe that the world and man and God, the past and future and present, are wholly different from what they really are; or else to discover, unaided, with slow anguish or sudden despair, that all is different from what they thought, that there is falsehood where they relied on truth, and evil where they looked up to good; till falsehood and evil shall seem everywhere, and truth and good nowhere? You spoke of the moral happiness and safety of your children; will you let them consist in falsehood, and depend upon the duration of error? Will you let your children run the risk of losing their old faith, without helping them to find a new one? Will you waste so much of their happiness for themselves, and of their usefulness for the world?"

Vere did not answer; he remained as if absorbed in thought, nervously tearing the petals off a rose which stood in the glass before him.

"Do please leave that flower alone, Vere," remonstrated Rheinhardt; "that is just the way that all you pessimists behave — pulling to pieces the few pleasant things which nature or man has succeeded in making, because the world is not as satisfactory as it might be. Such a nice rose that was, the very apple of our landlady's eye, who picked it to afford you a pleasant surprise for supper, and you have merely made a mess of it on the table-cloth. That's what comes of thinking too much

about responsibilities. One doesn't see the mischief one's fingers are up to."

And Rheinhardt, who was a tidy man, rose, and carefully swept the pink petals and the yellow seeds off the table into his hand, and thence transferred them into a little earthenware jar full of dry rose-leaves, which he kept, in true eighteenth-century style, on his writing-table.

"That is the difference of our philosophies," he remarked, with satisfaction; "you tear to pieces the few roses that are given us, and we pick up their leaves, and get the pleasant scent of them even when withered."

"The definition is not bad," put in Baldwin, throwing a bundle of fagots on the fire, and making it crackle and flare up lustily, flooding the room with ruddy light.

Vere turned away his face from the glow, and looked once more, vaguely and wistfully, into the bleak blueness of common and down-lying chill and dim in the moonlight.

"What you have been saying, Baldwin," he at last remarked, "may perhaps be true. It may be that it would be wiser to teach my children the things which I believe to be true. But you see I love my children a great deal; and — Well, I mean that I have not the heart to assume the responsibility of such a decision."

"You shirk your responsibilities," answered Baldwin, "and in doing so, you take upon yourself the heaviest responsibility of any."

From The Contemporary Review.
AGNOSTIC MORALITY.

BY FRANCES POWER COBBE.

AGNOSTICISM, if we may trust some recent indications, is passing out of the jubilant stage and entering one of the befitting seriousness. There lies the experience of a generation between the delirious exultation of Harriet Martineau over her "Spring in the Desert," and the sober sadness of the writer in the last number of this review on "The Responsibilities of Unbelief." The creed that "philosophy founded on science is the one thing needful," which the first considered to be "the crown of experience and the joy of life," has become to the second a burden and a sorrow — a "spring" indeed, but of waters of Mara. "I have been shorn of my belief," says one speaker in Vernon Lee's dialogue, "I am emanci-

pated, free, superior; all the things which a thorough materialist is in the eyes of materialists. But I have not yet attained to the perfection of being a hypocrite, of daring to pretend to my own soul that this belief of ours, this truth, is not bitter and abominable, arid and icy to our hearts."

No reader of this thoughtful and powerful paper can fail to see that the indignant antagonism which the earlier blatant atheism called forth, ought now to give place to mournful recognition of the later Agnosticism as a phase through which many of the most luminous intellects of our time are doomed to pass; the light which is in them waning till the thin crescent disappears. That it will be renewed again in the lustre of its fulness is not to be doubted, for this Agnosticism is no unfaithfulness to the true God of love and righteousness. It is precisely because the Agnostic fails to find that God where he persists in exclusively looking for him — namely, in the order of the physical world — that the darkness has fallen on his soul. Perhaps the example of Agnosticism, as the last result of a logically vicious method of religious inquiry, may not be useless in awaking us to the dangers of that method which has hitherto been used indiscriminately by friends as well as foes of faith.

All methods of religious inquiry resolve themselves into two — that which seeks God in the outer world, and that which seeks him in the world within. Out of the first came the old nature-worship, and dim, chaotic gods with myths alternately beautiful and sweet, and lustful, cruel, and grotesque; the Greek stories which Vernon Lee recalls of Zeus and Chronos and Cybele, and the wilder tales of ruder races, of Moloch and Astarte, Woden and Thor. In "the ages before morality," the mixed character of the gods drawn out of nature, and who represented her mixed aspects of good and evil, was not felt to be incongruous or unworthy of worship. As morality dawned more clearly the gods were divided between good and evil, Ormuzd and Ahrimanes, Osiris and Typhon, the Deys and Asuras. Some ages later, in the deeply speculative era of Alexandrian philosophy, the character of the author of nature and creator of the world presented itself as so dark a problem that many schools of Gnostics — Basilidians, Marcionites, Valentinians — deemed him to be an evil or fallen god, against whom the supreme and good God sent Christ to recall man-

kind to a higher obedience. The loftiest point ever reached, or probably attainable, by this method of religion was the deism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and to reach it two things were needful not included in the problem — namely, that those who found so good a God in nature should have looked for him there from the vantage ground of Christian tradition gained by the opposite method; and secondly, that they should have been yet in ignorance concerning much in nature which is now known, and so have raised their induction from imperfect premises. Pope, the typical poet of this deism, could say as the result of his survey of things: —

One truth is clear — whatever is, is right.

Tennyson, on the other hand, who knows somewhat of the doctrines of the "struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest," when he has cast his glance around on nature, "red in tooth and claw with ravin," and on all her "secret deeds" of wastefulness of the seeds of joy and life — feels that he can only "fall"

Upon the great world's altar-stairs
Which slope through darkness up to God.

The second method of religious inquiry, which seeks for God in the inner world of spirit and conscience, leads to a very different conclusion, even though it be but "in a glass darkly" that the mirror of the soul receives the divine reflection, and many a blur of human error has been mistaken for a feature of the divine countenance. The prophets of all time who have heard in their souls the voice of God and have cried aloud, "Thus saith the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity," and the faithful who have hearkened to them because their hearts echoed their prophecies, have been together keeping step, till now Christianity in all its more vitalized forms, and theism as everywhere superseding the elder deism, alike affirm the absolute goodness of God, discarding everything in earlier dogmas repugnant thereto. The first method — the external — being the one to which Agnostics have exclusively had recourse, it follows inevitably that the result is, as we see, the denial of religion, because they do not find in nature what nature (consulted exclusively) cannot teach.

Of course the Agnostic may here interpose and say that the test of the truth of the second method must be to check it by the first, and see whether God, as he actually works in nature, bears out the char-

acter which we derive from the testimony of our hearts. Such checking is every way right—nay, it is inevitable. No thoughtful man can avoid doing it, and encountering thereby all the strain of faith. But the difference lies in this, with which method do we *begin*, and to which do we assign the primary importance? If we first look for God outside of us, we shall usually stop at what we find there. If we first look for him within, we may afterwards face with illumined eyes the mystery of nature's shadows. The man who has found his God in conscience and in prayer may indeed shudder and tremble and "lift lame hands of faith, and grope" when he sees all the misery and agony of creation. But as he did not first find God in nature, neither will he lose hold on God because nature is to him inexplicable. He will fall back on the inner worship of God the Holy Ghost, the teacher of all mercy and justice; and trust that he who bids *him* to be merciful and just, cannot be otherwise himself than all-merciful, all-righteous. He will, in short, exercise, and can logically exercise, faith, in its simple and essential form—*i.e.*, trust in one who has a claim to be trusted as a friend already known, not a stranger whom he approaches without prior acquaintance. But, on the contrary, the man who has even succeeded in constructing some idea of a good God out of the inductions of physical science, has nothing to fall back upon when (as happens to all in our generation) his researches, pushed further, seem to lead him, *not* to a perfectly benevolent being, but to one whose dealings with his creation appear so blended of kindness, and of something that looks like cruelty, that he finds it easiest to leap to the conclusion that he has no existence or no moral nature, rather than that he should be so inconsistent.

These are the obvious results of the use of the two methods of religious inquiry, as used by men in all ages. But I have attempted to define them here, because I am anxious to draw attention to the fact (which I deem to be one of great importance) that modern Agnosticism, as distinguished from earlier forms of disbelief, has bound itself to the physical-science method, and renounced appeal to the inner witness to the character of God, by adopting the Darwinian theory of the nature of conscience, and thereby discrediting forever its testimony, as regards either morals or religion. This theory, as all the world now knows, is that of

hereditary conscience; the theory that our sense of right and wrong is nothing more than the inherited set of our brains in favor of the class of actions which have been found by our ancestors conducive to the welfare of the tribe, and against those of an opposite tendency. According to this doctrine there is no such thing as an "eternal and immutable morality," but all orders of intelligent beings must by degrees make for themselves what Vernon Lee aptly calls a "rule of the road," applicable to their particular convenience.* Thus at one and the same blow the moral *distinctions* of good and evil are exploded, and reduced to the contingently expedient or inexpedient, and the rank of the *faculty* whereby we recognize them is degraded from that of the loftiest in human nature to that of a mere inherited prejudice. How this theory overturns the foundations of morals, and by so doing deprives religion of its firmest basis, and so clears the way for Agnosticism, will become more evident the more we reflect on the matter. A better example of the working of the doctrine could not be desired than that afforded in a passage in this very article, which bears the stamp of a fragment of autobiography. Baldwin, the character in the dialogue who obviously represents the writer's own views, after expressing the intense desire he has felt to believe in "the beautiful dreams which console other men," goes on to say:—

Instead of letting myself believe, I forced myself to doubt and examine all the more; I forced myself to study all the subjects which seemed as if they must make my certainty of evil only stronger and stronger. I instinctively hated science, because science had destroyed my beliefs in justice and mercy; I forced myself, for a while, to read only scientific books. Well, I was rewarded. Little by little it dawned upon me that all my misery had originated in a total misconception of the relative

* Mr. Darwin himself, in his "Descent of Man," expressly instances the worker bees as a case wherein "conscience" might approve of the massacre of our brother drones. It may not be inopportune to remind readers who have not made a study of the philosophy or history of ethics that the older schools of "independent" morality taught that actions were "right" or "wrong," as lines are "right" (*i.e.*, straight) or "wrong from" straightness, and that (according to Clarke's definition of the doctrine) "these eternal differences make it fit for the creatures so to act, they lay on them an obligation so to do, separate from the will of God and antecedently to any prospect of advantage or reward." Mr. Herbert Spencer aljures both the doctrine and the metaphor. He says: "Acts are called good or bad according as they are well or ill adjusted to ends." Now this is exactly what the grand old terms right and wrong do not imply. A line is not "right" because it runs in a certain direction, but because of its character of straightness.

positions of Nature and of man; I began to perceive that the distinction between right and wrong conduct had arisen in the course of the evolution of mankind, that right and wrong meant only that which was conducive or detrimental to the increasing happiness of humanity, that they were referable only to human beings in their various relations with one another; that it was impossible to explain them, except with reference to human society, and that to ask for moral aims and moral methods of mere physical forces, which had no moral qualities, and which were not subject to social relations, or to ask for them of any Will hidden behind those forces, and who was equally independent of those human and social necessities which alone accounted for a distinction between right and wrong, was simply to expect one set of phenomena from objects which could only present a wholly different set of phenomena: to expect sound to be recognized by the eye, and light and color to be perceived by the ear. . . . Why go into details? You know that the school of philosophy to which I adhere has traced all distinctions of right and wrong to the perceptions, enforced upon man by mankind, and upon mankind by man, of the differences between such courses as are conducive to the higher development and greater happiness of men, and such other courses as are conducive only to their degradation and extinction (p. 173).

Here is the doctrine of inherited conscience clearly posed as lying at the very root of Vernon Lee's Agnosticism, and closing the door against the longed-for belief that his intuitions of justice and mercy had their origin in the Maker of all. The importance of this matter is so great, and yet has been so little noticed from the theological side, that I trust I shall be pardoned for devoting to it the greater part of the space at my disposal in this article.*

Hitherto religion has either been avowedly founded (as by the second method of inquiry above described) on the moral nature of man, or has appealed to it, as the ratification of the argument drawn from external nature. The highest faculty in us — as we deemed it to be — was on

all hands admitted to be the nearest to God, and the one fittest to bear witness regarding him. "God is with mortals by conscience" has been generally assumed as an axiom in theological argument, and Christianity itself, by its dogma of the Third Person in the Trinity, only consecrated the conviction of the wisest Pagans that there is "a Holy Spirit throned within us, of our good and evil deeds the Guardian and Observer, who draws towards us as we draw towards him."* On the side of philosophy, this same moral faculty was by the long line of noblest teachers, beginning in Plato and culminating in Kant, allotted a place of exceptional honor and security. Moral truths they held to be "necessary" truths, and our knowledge of them intuitive and transcendental; and even the lower schools, while making a different test of the morality of actions, uniformly allotted to the sense of moral obligation a supreme place in human nature.

How changed is the view we are permitted by Darwinism to take of this crowned and sceptred impostor in our breasts, who claimed so high an origin, and has so base an one! That "still small voice" to which we were wont to hearken reverently, what is it then, but the echo of the rude cheers and hisses wherewith our fathers greeted the acts which they thought useful or the reverse — those barbarous forefathers who howled for joy round the wicker images wherein the Druids burned their captives, and yelled under every scaffold of the martyrs of truth and liberty? That solid ground of transcendental knowledge, which we imagined the deepest thinker of the world had sounded for us, and proved firm as a rock, what is it but the shifting sand-heaps of our ancestral impressions, — nay, rather let us say, the mental *kitchen middens* of generations of savages?

Is this revolution in our estimate of conscience of so little consequence, I ask, that our clergy take so little notice of it? To me it seems that it bears ruinously, and cannot fail so to bear, first on morals, then on religion. With the detection of conscience as a mere prejudice must end the solemn farce of moral struggle, of penitence and of remorse. As well might we be expected to continue so to struggle and to repent, holding this view of conscience, as the company at a *déance* might be expected to continue to gape awestruck at an apparition which has been pounced

* When Mr. Darwin did me the honor to send me the advanced sheets of his "Descent of Man," wherein he first clearly broached this theory, I wrote to him that, in my humble judgment, the doctrine, if ever generally accepted, would sound the knell of the virtue of mankind. Mr. Darwin smiled in his usual kind way at my fanaticism, as he doubtless deemed it; but so far am I from retracting that judgment, that I am more than ever convinced, after ten years' observation, that this doctrine is a deadly one, paralyzing moral activity, and, in the long run, bringing on the spiritual death of atheism. It may be of some interest to mention that when preparing this book, Mr. Darwin told me he had never read Kant, and accepted with reluctance the loan which I pressed on him of Semple's translation of the "Metaphysic of Ethics." He returned it in a few days, after, I believe, a cursory inspection.

* Seneca.

upon and exposed as a vulgar and ignorant medium! And with the discrediting of conscience as a divinely constituted guide and monitor must end the possibility of approaching God through it, and of arguing from its lessons of righteousness that he who made it must be righteous likewise.

The thinker who will sift this doctrine of hereditary conscience, and divide the grains of truth which it doubtless contains from the large heap of errors and assumptions, will do the world a noble service, and effect more to dispel Agnosticism than by any other piece of philosophical work. That there is *something* in our consciousness (sometimes confounded with conscience) which may be truly traced to inheritance, is probable — perhaps certain. That there is much else which cannot be so traced is much more certain. To prove that such is the case it would be enough to analyze two well-defined and almost universal sentiments. One is the anticipation common to mankind in all ages, and the *motif* of half the literature of the world, that *justice will be done* — done somehow, somewhere, by some power personal as God, or impersonal as the Buddhist *karma*. Considering that no experience of any, even of the very happiest generation of mankind, can have justified, much less originated, this expectation, it is clear that it must have had some source altogether different from that of an hereditary "set of brains," arising out of accumulated and persistent experience. Another sentiment common to all civilized nations in our day is the duty of preserving human life, even in the case of deformed and diseased infants. This sentiment is not only like the anticipation of justice authorized by experience, and inexplicable by the theory that moral judgments arise out of such experience, but is in diametrical opposition to anything which experience can have taught concerning the welfare of the race, being in precise contradiction of and rebellion against the great Darwinian law of "the survival of the fittest." Were our moral impressions merely the result of ancestral experience, the nations of Europe at this hour must have come to regard the Spartan practice of infanticide as one of the most sacred and imperative of moral obligations. I have never heard, however, that even the Chinese, who have been killing their superfluous babies by thousands for ages, have professed to consider it a *duty*, or anything better than a convenient practice to do so. Their

governors, indeed, have again and again issued edicts against infanticide as a *crime*.

Thus the doctrine of hereditary conscience fails to explain some of the most salient phenomena for which it proposes to account; nay, even in one of the instances chosen by Mr. Darwin himself, egregiously misses the mark. In "The Descent of Man," the author describes repentance as the natural return of kindly feelings, when anger has subsided. But even his favorite observation of animals might have shown him that animosity, once excited between dogs or horses, has no tendency to subside and give place to friendship, but rather to become more intense; and in the case of men, the old Roman knew better when he remarked, *Præprium humani ingenii est odisse quem læseris*. Every bitter word and unkind action (as those who have ever said or done them know only too well) renders the return to kindly feelings more and more difficult, till nothing short of a mental revolution (rarely effected, I imagine, without the aid of religion) enables us to forgive those whom we have injured. The really childish caricature of the awful phenomena of repentance and remorse which the amiable philosopher, who it would seem never needed repentance, devised out of the depth of the scientific imagination is, I venture to think, a fair specimen of the shallowness of this new theory of ethics.

It is deeply to be deplored that this doctrine should have found acceptance on the authority of one, who, however great as a naturalist, was neither a moralist nor a metaphysician, at a juncture when the tendencies of the age all drive us only too much in the direction of physical inquiry as the road to truth. The passionate love for nature's beauty, the ardent curiosity concerning her secrets, which belong in these days not only to artists and men of science, but more or less to us all, have turned the whole current of thought towards natural external phenomena. And simultaneously with this set of the tide, the increasing keenness and subtlety of our feelings and width of our sympathies cause us to notice the evil latent among these natural phenomena, as was never done by any previous generation of men. We bring things to the bar of moral judgment which our fathers never dreamed of questioning. We writhe as the long panorama of suffering and destruction is unrolled before our eyes from the earliest geologic time to the present; nor can we

sit down contented as they were with such explanations of it as a reference to "Adam's transgression," or pages of the easy optimism of Archbishop King. Our minds are distracted, our very hearts are wrung by such thoughts as those exposed in Mill's "Essays on Religion," even while we justly charge him with exaggeration of the evil, and understatement of the happiness of the world. We cannot blink these questions in our generation, and it is a cruel enhancement of our difficulties that at such a time this hateful doctrine of hereditary conscience should have been broached to drive us out of the best shelter of faith—the witness of a reliable moral consciousness to the righteousness and mercy of our Maker.

Nor does the evil stop even here, for the action and reaction of morals and religion on one another is interminable. Evolutionism has originated the theory of hereditary conscience, and that theory has had a large share in producing modern Agnosticism, and again Agnosticism is undermining practical ethics in all directions. Vernon Lee feels deeply "the responsibilities of unbelief." But are not such sentiments the last failing wail of melody from a chord already snapped? Let me explain why I think that almost every virtue is destined to perish one after another, or at least to shrink and fade, if Agnosticism prevail among mankind.

Morality, on the Agnostic projection, of course limits its scope to the field of human relations. It is supposed to have risen out of them, and to have no meaning beyond them. Man has brothers, and to them he owes duty. He knows nothing of a father, and can owe him no duty. Altruism remains the sole virtue, piety being exploded. In the language of divines, the second great commandment of the law is still in force, but we have dispensed with the first.

Here at the starting-point arises a doubt whether Agnosticism does not fling away, with the obligation to love God, the best practical help towards fulfilling his own law and loving our neighbor. The sentiments which religion teaches would appear to be the very best qualified to produce altruism. For one so amiably constituted as Mr. Darwin, ready to love all his neighbors by nature, and where he quarrels with them to return equally naturally to friendly sentiments, there are at least ninety-nine persons who "love their friends and hate their enemies," and feel at the best only indifference to those very

large classes of their fellow-creatures included in the stupid, the vulgar, and the disagreeable. Probably every Christian and theist who has tried conscientiously to "love his neighbor as himself" has experienced an imperative necessity to call up ideas and feelings derived from his love of God to help him in the often difficult achievement. It has been the idea of a perfect and all-adorable Being, on which his heart has reposed when sickened with human falsehood and folly. It has been in the remembrance of God's patience and forgiveness to himself that he has learned pity and pardon for his offending brothers. One of the greatest philanthropists of the past generation, Joseph Tuckerman, told Mary Carpenter that when he saw a filthy, degraded creature in the streets, his feelings of repulsion were almost unconquerable, till he forcibly recalled to mind that God made that miserable man, and that he should meet him hereafter in heaven. Then came always, he said, a revulsion of feeling, and he was enabled to go with a chastened spirit about his work of mercy. The notion (which I have heard a noted atheist expound in a lecture) that we cannot love our brothers thoroughly till we have renounced our Father and our eternal home, seems to me simply absurd. If universal benevolence be the one supreme virtue, then again we may say, "*Si Dieu n'existait pas il faudrait l'inventer.*" If it were merely that belief in him should help us to that virtue.

But it is not only on the side of God that the morality of Agnosticism stops short. All the personal duties which, on the Kantian system, a man "owes to himself," and which were inculcated foremost of all by the older religious ethics, because they tended directly to the supreme end of creation and the approach of finite souls to divine holiness, these lofty personal duties are retained in the new ethics only on the secondary and practically wholly insufficient grounds of their subservience to the general welfare of the community.

Thus, of the three branches of the elder morality corresponding to the threefold aspects of human life—religious duty, which was laid on man as a son of God, personal duty, laid on him as a rational free agent, and social duty, laid on him as a member of the community—the last alone survives in Agnostic ethics. Two-thirds of the provinces of morality have been abandoned at one sweep, as by retreating Rome in her decadence. But,

I ask, is the hope of preserving the remainder from the barbarian hosts of selfishness and passion any the better? Is it more easy to make men philanthropists when we have given up the effort to make them saints? Surely it is nothing of the kind. Even for our neighbor's own sake there is nothing we can ever *do* for him half so useful as to *be* ourselves the very noblest, purest, holiest men and women we know how. The recognition of the supremacy of personal duties appears to be the first step towards the right performance of the highest social duties.

Deprived of two-thirds of its original empire and dethroned from its high seat of judgment, does there yet perchance remain for duty, as understood by the Agnostic, some special sanctions, some more close and tender, if not equally lofty and solemn claims, than those which belonged to it under the older theistic schemes? Such would seem to be the persuasion of many amongst those who have felt "the responsibilities of unbelief," perhaps of all the best minds amongst them — Mr. Morley, Mr. Harrison, George Eliot, and now, obviously, of Vernon Lee. This thoughtful writer is actually of opinion that the belief in an immortal life is an "enervating" one, and that there is a "moral tonic" in believing that "there is no place beyond the grave where folly and selfishness may be expiated and retrieved, and that, whatever good may be done, must be done in this world." It is hard to realize the mental conditions out of which such a judgment as this can have arisen. It is true that an immeasurable *pity*, an almost limitless indulgence, seems the natural sentiment which should flood the heart of one who looks on his brother men, and thinks that all their pains and sorrows are to lead only to the grave; that all their aspirations and struggles and prayers are destined to eternal disappointment; that all the love of which their hearts are full is ready to be spilled, like precious wine, in the dust. But these mournful feelings are assuredly the "enervating" ones, for nothing can be so enervating as despair. What "moral tonic" can there be in the conviction that, whether we labor or sit still, sacrifice our life-blood for our brother, or sacrifice him to our selfishness, it will soon be all one to him and to us?

We have all heard much from pulpits of the virtue of faith and the virtue of charity: but I think we hear too little of the virtue of hope, which completes the trinity, and is an indivisible part of it.

We are so constituted that it is impossible for us to exercise charity persistently without both faith and hope, like Aaron and Hur, to sustain our sinking arms. Without faith in the divine germ of goodness buried in every human breast, we cannot labor for the higher welfare of our brother, or afford him that nobler sympathy, without which to give all our goods to feed him profiteth nothing. And without hope in a future, stretching out before him in infinite vistas of joy and holiness, we cannot attach due importance to his moral welfare; we cannot measure the sin of misguiding and corrupting him, or the glory of leading him to virtue. Nay, in a larger sense, philanthropy and the enthusiasm of humanity, the very flowers of Agnosticism, must wither, if unwatered by hope. We must needs work on one hypothesis or the other. Either all men are destined to an immortal existence, or else they will perish at death, and the earth itself will grow old and sustain life no longer on its barren breast, and then all the hopes and virtues and triumphs of the human race will be buried in oblivion, no conscious mind in all the hollow universe remembering that man ever had existence.

Is it not a paradox to say that the former idea is "enervating," and the latter a "moral tonic"? A moral *curare*, I should take it to be, paralyzing will and motion.*

But if Agnostic ethics be thus miserably defective — if they be narrow in their scope and poor in their aim of conferring transitory happiness on a perishing race — if they have no basis in a pure reason or a divinely taught conscience, but appeal only to a shifting and semi-barbarous prejudice — if, even from the point of view of sentiment, they lack the motives which are best calculated to inspire zeal

* We are now told, as the latest grand discovery of Darwinism, that Man in some generations to come, will be "a toothless, hairless, slow-limbed animal, incapable of extended locomotion. His feet will have no division of toes, and he will be very averse to fighting." (See *Nineteenth Century*, May, 1883, p. 750.) I congratulate those who think it sufficient reward to anticipate "posthumous activities" among these "men of the future!" Even as I write this page a profound remark on the heart-paralyzing effects of Agnostic hopelessness on a very noble intellect has come to my hand. In a letter in the *Spectator*, May 12, 1883, Mr. Eubule Evans, writing of George Eliot, says: "Whoever holds that human life is little better than a vast waste-heap of blighted possibilities will, however tender he may be towards the objects of specialized affection, yet naturally fail in that keenness of love towards all living, which is the only safeguard against the subtle process of cruelty. Beneath her philosophy lay a heart feminine when stirred to tenderness towards the individual, but hopeless, and therefore in a way merciless, towards the race. The atmosphere of the worker is the leaden atmosphere of fate in which human frailty meets no mercy, and human longing can find no hope."

and self-sacrifice; then it is surely time for high-minded Agnostics to recognize that their laudable efforts to construct a morality on the ruins of religion has failed, and must ever fail. The dilemma is more terrible than they have yet contemplated. They have imagined that they had merely to choose between morality with religion, or morality without religion. But the only choice for them is between morality and religion together, or the relinquishment both of morality and religion. They were sanguine enough to think they could rescue the compass of duty from the wreck of faith; but their hope was vain, and the well-meaning divers among them who have gone in search of it have come up with a handful of sea-tangle.

Much false lustre has, I think, been cast over a creed which is in truth the "City of Dreadful Night," by the high altruistic sentiments and hopes of certain illustrious Agnostics. George Eliot's aspiration to join the "choir invisible," whose voices are "the music of the world;" Mr. Frederic Harrison's generous desire for "posthumous beneficent activity," have thrown, for a time, over it a light as from a sun which has set. For myself, I confess there seems to me something infinitely pathetic in these longings of men and women, who once hoped for a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," amid "the spirits of the just made perfect," but who are fain now to be content with such ghosts of hope as these. The millennium of Darwinism for the "surviving fittest" of the human race — those toothless, hairless, slow-moving creatures, with all peaceful sentiments bred in, and all combative ones bred out — is, after all, no such vision of paradise as that even the purest altruist can find in it compensation for the belief that all the men and women whom he has ever known or loved, are doomed to annihilation long before that new race — such as it will be — can arise.

The misery of his hopeless creed has been felt, I cannot doubt, in all its bitterness by the writer of this eloquent paper. No more affecting words have been penned for many a day than those in which he makes one of his speakers exclaim: "The worst of death is not the annihilation of ourselves. Oh no, that is nothing." The intolerable agony he has truly felt to be the apprehension of the hour when the soul we love will not merely depart and leave us lonely on the shore, but be itself lost — drowned in the ocean of existence never to live again. We

may easily read between the lines of his dialogue, that it was the first shock of this tremendous, this unendurable thought which drove Vernon Lee out of the "Palace of Art," to seek, if it might be found, the solution of the "riddle of the painful earth." Alas! that so noble an intellect, destined, I cannot doubt, to exercise wide influence in the coming years, should have found no better explanation of that enigma than the wretched doctrine of hereditary conscience, and the supposed discovery that nature contains no moral elements, and has no moral power behind it! A happier conclusion might surely have been reached by the mind which penned the burst of eloquence placed in the mouth of the speaker Vere: "It is love which has taught the world for its happiness that what has been begun here, will not forever be interrupted, nor what has been ill done forever remain unatoned, that the affection once kindled will never cease, that the sin committed can be wiped out, and the good conceived can be achieved — that all within which is good and happy, and forever struggling here, virtue, genius, will be free to act hereafter, that the creatures thrust asunder in the world, vainly trying to clasp one another in the crowd, may unite forever." That love which invents immortality, is itself, I think, the pledge and witness of immortality. It is the Infinite stirring within the finite breast.

From Tinsley's Magazine.

REMINISCENCES OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BY LADY LYTTON BULWER (LATE DOWAGER LADY LYTTON).

"Every man his own judgment of Paris."

MANY years ago, when Walter Savage Landor lived at Bath, the present writer was also living in that most *livable* and exquisitely beautiful of English provincial cities. Ah, had we to travel thousands of miles in a foreign land to come upon such exquisite natural beauties as that Vale of Somerset abounds in, diademed by such a city as Bath — O, how we should rave about it! Then, too, the people are so civilized, so obliging, so *facile à vivre* — in short, so unlike Somersetshire bores in particular, and Anglo-Saxon bears in general, that the natives, sensible of, and grateful as it were for, the prodigal gifts both nature and art have bestowed upon them, combine to make it

a most delightful city of refuge; for, as poor Mr. Landor, the hero of this paper, used to say, in his peculiar way of pronouncing the word "wonderful," which he always called *woonderful* — it is the most "*woonderfully* beautiful city in the world; Bath and Florence are the only two places where I can live." Well, when he did live there, he was an *habitué* of my house, and also at that of a lady whom I shall call Mrs. Avenel, who had two beautiful daughters, and a hobbledehoy of a son, who had come in for no share of the family beauty, but who, being not a little conceited, and by no means good-tempered, did very well as a butt for Mr. Landor, as a sort of background to the complimentary poetical gems he was always writing upon his two beautiful sisters. But Mr. Landor's chief butt was an elongated, moth-eaten-looking individual, whom I shall call Q., but who called himself "the Poet Q." He had written a bulky quarto, which he called an epic poem; but, alas, one of the very first critiques upon it, in a leading literary slaughter-house of a review, had been, —

An epic poem should be sweet as manna;
But *this*, by Jove, is ipsecacuanha!

a critique which Mr. Landor, with one of his stentorian roars, was never tired of repeating. Nor did he even let the unfortunate Q. in the corner (where the latter always sat in the presence of the *woonderful* man) off with that; for the Poet Q. had also written another epic — let us name it "The Falls of Niagara" — which he called "his great work," saying it had taken him twenty years *to conceive*; and upon a young lady one evening saying, "Dear me, Mr. Q. is wofully stupid!" the remorseless Landor, exploding as usual into one of his roars at the mention of Q.'s name, said, "God bless my soul, you'd be stupid if you had had *water on the brain* for twenty years, like the Poet Q.!"

Nor did Frederick Avenel, whose overweening conceit certainly made him fair game, fare any better at his hands. Charles Kean was at that time playing "Hamlet" to crowded houses at Bath. Fred Avenel, a lanky youth of eighteen, crowned with very red hair, and having pale greenish eyes and an excelsior nose, always aspiring upwards, was seized with the unaccountable mania that *he* embodied the *true* type of what had been Shakespeare's ideal of the Dane; the consequence was that poor Mrs. Avenel's house reëchoed from morning to night with "To

be, or not to be? that is the question." And if the sense of the house could have been taken (*that* being an attribute with which Fred had nothing to do), *not to be* would have been carried *nem. con.*; for a hundred ducats would not have repaired the damage done to the dining room chairs, walls, and curtains in thrusting at the mythological rat that was "dead for a ducat." Nor did poor Mrs. Avenel feel at all compensated when one evening (the first of many) the volunteer and supernumerary Hamlet burst upon her and his sisters in the drawing-room, *en route* for a fancy ball, in all the black and purple, jet and feathered glories of the Prince of Denmark, announcing that he thought he looked the image of Charles Kean!

"And the fine dark eyes, Fred, and the beautiful glossy curly dark hair, where are they?" asked his younger sister.

"Girls *are* such fools!" muttered the philosophic Dane, with a withering sneer, as he strode out of the room to where, it was to be hoped, he found more appreciative spectators. There was no harm in Sophy Avenel's query about the eyes — *ça ne tirait pas à conséquence* — but that about the hair was fatal; for three days after, when some amateur theatricals were to be graced by this new Hamlet, lo! the straight, obstinate, vermilion locks were transformed into a dark and highly frizzled mass, which was a perfect facsimile of fried parsley.

Mr. Landor and I both dined at Mrs. Avenel's on that day, and had been duly warned by her, so as to break the shock, and not let our mirth mar our manners when Fred, prior to his departure for the scene of action, should make his triumphant entry, dressed for the part. He did so, just after the coffee, and stood, with folded arms, in a fine contemplative pose, just under the treacherous chandelier, the light of which converted the fried parsley into little inch-square cheques of red, green, and purple. Still, with the aid of our pocket-handkerchiefs we all behaved extremely well, including Mr. Landor. But *his* good behavior was only the lion's pause before the spring; for, striding up to Hamlet with a most solemn face and his hands behind his back, he accosted him with "God bless my soul, Fred, I'm sorry to see you are in such a bad way!"

"Bad way! what do you mean, Mr. Landor?" asked the irate "noble Dane," knitting his brows, and champing his under lip, in the impression that "that old bear," as he irreverently always called the

illustrious author of "Pericles and Aspasia," was going to read him a lecture upon his dissipated habits and histrionic mania.

"Bad way! what *do* you mean, Mr. Landor?"

"Why, my dear fellow, every one can see that you are *dying by inches*."

The indignant sibilant squeak of Fred's indignation, as he rushed from the room, was quite lost in Mr. Landor's loud and reiterated roars of laughter, for no one ever appreciated so fully either his jests or his *bon-mots* as he did himself; at all events, it would have been impossible for them to do so as loudly, at least, where his two pet targets, Fred Avenel and the Poet Q., were concerned. But then all Landor did was *fortissimo*, incisive, trenchant, and decisive—none of your happy mediums, or *suaviter in modo's*, with even a *fortiter in re* at the end of them. When he gave (and though by no means rich he gave often) it was always fully, freely, thoroughly; for despite his old gabardine of a brown surtout, shining at the seams, and often minus some buttons, made more conspicuous by their absence—a garment in which no Israelite could have detected sufficient regenerative capabilities to have invested half-a-crown—yet was the lining, that is, the man, thoroughly *grand seigneur*, of the days when that now nearly extinct race existed as the rule and not as the exception; of the days, in fact, before this thoroughly radical era of adhesive envelopes (those insulting exaggerations of the old tabooed wafer), halfpenny postage cards, and all the abominations of a similar stamp. Yet no butterfly emerged from its chrysalis state into its purple, gold, and winged glories could be more different than the matutinal Walter Savage Landor in the aforesaid old brown surtout, and the thoroughbred, noble-headed, distinguished-looking man who bore that name when dressed for dinner. If his laughter was muscular and stentorian, the thews and sinews of his vituperation or his indignation, even with regard to his historical or archæological feuds, was equally athletic, of which I shall give an instance presently. It happened that there was at that time in Bath a young artist, a portrait-painter in oils, whom Mr. Landor patronized—no, not patronized, for that was not his way; but whom he tried to serve. He had sat to him for his portrait *en buste*, which he gave me, a perfect *replica* of the magnificent head, and admirable as to tone and pose, with just the faintest *souçon* of the immortal

old brown coat, sufficient to excite that quintessence of faith, the evidence of things not seen.

Mr. Landor insisted that I should sit for my picture to his *protégé*. I consented, upon the express proviso that he (Landor) should always be there at the sittings, so that I might either listen or talk during the penance, and not die of *ennui*. Some time before this he had promised to send me his "Pericles and Aspasia," but was so long in doing it that I thought he had forgotten all about it. But not so. One morning a long deal case, looking more like a case of champagne than anything else, arrived. It contained not only "Pericles and Aspasia," but "Imaginary Conversations," and all his other works, quarto editions, splendidly bound in Russia, and lined with blue *moire*, as if they had been for royal presentations; so I determined that these magnificent and beautiful volumes should lie on a table, covered with a Persian carpet, and, with a Greek vase filled with flowers, form part of what painters call the *ordonnance* of the picture. During one of these sittings the artist happened to speak enthusiastically about some lines of Ben Jonson; whereupon Mr. Landor, who was seated at the time, bounded from his chair, began pacing the room and shaking his tightly clenched hands, as he thundered out,—

"Ben Jonson! not another word about him! It makes my blood boil! I haven't patience to hear the fellow's name! A pigmy! an upstart! a presumptuous varlet! WHO DARED to be thought more of than Shakespeare was in his day!"

"Well, but surely," ventured the artist, so soon as he could speak for suppressed laughter, "that was not poor Ben Jonson's fault, but the fault of the indiscriminating generation in which they both lived."

"Not at all!" roared Landor, his eyeballs becoming bloodshot, and his nostrils dilating, "not at all! The fellow should have walled himself up in his own brick and mortar before he had connived at and allowed such sacrilege."

"But," said I, for the painter could not speak for laughter, "even if Ben Jonson had been able to achieve such a *tour de force* as this architectural suicide would have been, I am very certain, Mr. Landor, that, taking 'Every Man in his Humor,' Shakespeare would have been the very first to pull down his friend's handiwork, and restore him to the world."

"No such thing!" rejoined Mr. Lan-

dor, turning fiercely upon me. "Shakespeare never wasted his time; and with his *woonderful* imagination he'd have known he could have created fifty better."

It would take up too much space to reproduce the whole of this extraordinary, not to say unique, onslaught upon Ben Jonson; but there can be no doubt that if he saw and heard it from the shadowy land, he must have been greatly amused; and from the bloodshot eyes, and pugilistically doubled and shaken fists, that "suited the action to the word," must have sung instead of

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
Box with me only where you are,
And I'll not wish you here!

At another sitting we had an equally ludicrous, because equally vehement, scene, though from a very different cause. I happened to say to the artist, "Come now, Mr. —, although Mrs. Primrose *did* wish as many jewels in her picture as the limner could throw in for nothing, yet I really must protest against your giving me as much flattery on the same terms. It is all very well for people to call my eyes violet by courtesy; but if they are, they must be the *leaves* of the violet that is meant. As to tell truth and shame the devil, I'm sorry to say that the said eyes are *tout bonnement* green." The last word was no sooner out of my mouth than Mr. Landor was "on his legs" — that is, was shot from his seat, as if he had been a twelve-pounder projected from a cannon.

"God bless my soul! green eyes are the most *woonderfully* beautiful eyes in the whole" (which he pronounced *wool*) "world. It so happened," he continued, speaking, as was his wont, with such express-train rapidity that every now and then he made a sort of snap at his under lip with his upper teeth, as if to prevent all the words rolling down pell-mell on the floor — "it so happened that when I was a young man at Venice, I was standing in the doorway of the Café Florian one day, watching the pigeons on the Piazza San Marco, when an old gentleman rushed up to me, and said, 'Pardon me, sir, but will you allow me to look into your eyes? Ah, I thought so! Sir, you have green eyes! I never saw but one pair before, and they belonged to the late empress Catherine of Russia; they were the most *woonderfully* beautiful eyes in the world.' I have reason," continued Mr. Landor, "to remember this, for while the old gentleman

was examining my eyes I had my pocket picked."

"No doubt," said the artist, convulsed with laughter, "the old gentleman saw something green in your eye, sir."

I generally came to these sittings in a sedan-chair, being in evening costume; but on that day, as the painter had only something to do to the head, I had arranged to take a walk with Mr. Landor on Lansdown after.

"I fear," said I, as we were preparing to go, "that the clouds look rather threatening for our walk."

"O, that is no matter," he replied, "for I have an umbrella — a *woonderfully* good large serviceable one, and I'll get it as we pass my house."

And so he did, and pounding it sonorously on the pavement as we went, we trudged on. But how describe that extraordinary machine? for from its bulk, complications, and unwieldiness, it was fully entitled to that name. It had a thick yellow stick with a crook — a short and stunted one — at the end of it. But the color — or rather the remains of the color — how even attempt to describe that? Professor Tyndall himself would have been puzzled by any retrospective process of analyzation to have decided upon its correct classification; for though nominally cotton, it appeared a sort of exceptional fabric, woven as to color out of faded showers and archæological whirlwinds, woofed with dust, while the different compartments forming the circle were so leathern and bulky that they gave one the idea of being made out of the wings of Brobdingnag bats; for of course in Brobdingnag the bats were as big in proportion as the people. When the machine was closed all these flapping bats' wings were kept together by tape-strings, in color, width, and texture being an admirable imitation of strips of seaweed, as they were of that dark, dingy, dull bronze green which the French call *glaucue*. However strenuously the old brown surtout might have disowned "the soft impeachment," this umbrella was evidently one of its collateral relations. But the most extraordinary thing about it remains to be told, which is, that its owner was actually proud of it, not to say vainglorious about it!

"Ah!" said he, seeing my eyes fixed on this meteorological problem — "ah! this has been a *woonderfully* serviceable umbrella. It has been all over the world with me. People are always complaining of their umbrellas being stolen from them;

but I have been *woonderfully* fortunate in this one; I have never lost it even in lodgings and hotels."

That I could easily believe. Despite the wind, which was very high, a few large drops of rain began to fall; so after hastily fumbling at the seaweed strings, and thereby entangling them more hopelessly than ever, till he found them more knotty than any problem in Euclid, Mr. Landor, whose impetuosity was always for cutting Gordian knots, with one supreme effort broke the refractory strings, and, with an air of triumph fully warranted by so colossal an achievement, unfurled this ponderous piece of itinerant shelter. But, alas, the wind soon became a perfect hurricane, and upturned the *woonderful* umbrella like a Patagonian wineglass, as if it thought the falling rain was nectar that the gods had spilt. But even this classical delusion on the part of the umbrella did not sufficiently enlist its owner's sympathy to mollify him; so, with his left foot thrown backward, and his right firmly planted forward, his head thrown back in the attitude of Ajax defying the lightning, he stood shaking the umbrella with that sort of "Don't-suppose-you'll-make-me-let-go" vengeance with which a bull-dog shakes a captured rat. This mode of waging war with the storm of course only made the latter more victorious, and inflated the extemporized cotton wineglass ten times more. The whole scene was so inconceivably ludicrous that it was fortunate the little artist was not there, or I am very certain he would have rolled on the grass in convulsions.

At length I got Mr. Landor to listen to my proposition that we should retrace our steps and get home as soon as possible, by which means we should be turning our backs to the wind and so obtain more power over the umbrella, which I also begged of him to let me try my hand upon.

Apparently weary, as he might well be, from the energy he had lavished on the proceeding of threatening Jupiter by brandishing this formidable weapon at the clouds, he made it over to me, and by planting the handle in the ground, and taking a little time with both hands over each of the whalebone ribs, I at length succeeded — though not quite as dexterously as a Japanese juggler might have done — in reconvertng the wineglass back into an umbrella. Any person *not* knowing the *cause*, and only seeing and hearing the *effect*, of my achievement, might have supposed, from the vehemence and exaggerated enthusiasm of Mr. Landor's

eulogiums, that I had then and there been not only the first inventor, but the first practical utilizer, of the electric telegraph, which was not at that time a *fait accompli*.

"Well, you have the most *woonderful* mechanical genius I ever saw in the *wool* (whole) course of my life; perfectly *woonderful*! Now, I couldn't have done that had my life depended on it."

And in this hyperbolical strain he continued, till I left him at his own door, renewing it through the whole of dinner — for he dined with me that day, and so did the Avenels, who were not a little amused at my *woonderful* mechanical genius — till we all became a little tired of it.

After dinner Mrs. Avenel said to me, — "I want to ask Mr. Landor to dinner to-morrow, but I am obliged to ask Mr. Q.; and really Mr. Landor does so laugh at him and is so horribly rude to him that I quite dread it, for of course he won't mind Fred; and the admiral, who does keep him a little in order, is away. I wish you would speak to Mr. Landor, and get him to promise that as we shall be quite *en petit comilé* I do hope he won't skin poor Mr. Q. alive with his scathing ridicule." I promised to undertake the negotiation; and in the course of the evening, when pretty Rose Avenel had charmed him into perfect good-humor with "Casta Diva," I opened my mission with a degree of amiable and reckless candor that Count Bismarck might have mistaken for his own. For after he had accepted Mrs. Avenel's invitation, I said *à brûle pourpoint*, —

"Now, Mr. Landor, you will be deprived of my delightful society unless you will faithfully promise me one thing."

"I promise anything and everything — except to pay on demand three millions sterling."

"O, it is much easier than that, what I want you to promise, and not half so costly. It is that you will pledge yourself not to cut up poor Mr. Q. into such a mincemeat of ridicule as you always do."

His first answer to this was a loud roar of laughter, such as he always exploded in at merely the mention of Mr. Q.'s name; and, as soon as he could speak, he said, —

"And you call that not so costly, when the richest thing in the world is a *béchamel* of Q.! Well, well, I promise I'll be on my best behavior; in short, I'll be quite complimentary."

"No, no; all compliments are forbidden fruit in that quarter, for it is too much for

mortal gravity to hear your treacherous ironical flattery, and listen to the poor unconscious victim in his little thin attenuated voice, that seems as moth-eaten as his face looks, thanking you with 'I'm sure, Mr. Landor, I feel highly flattered at your praise.'

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, then, only Greek and Latin quotations. Ha, ha, ha!"*

"Most decidedly not; above all, and before all, I bar them; and if you *won't* make an honest, *bonâ fide*, unconditional, and unequivocal promise of good behavior, and that you will *not* be guilty of *lèse Q.*, why, then there is nothing for it but for me to employ my wonderful mechanical genius in constructing a muzzle for you that shall defy tampering with as effectually as ever the iron mask did."

After a few more reiterated roars at poor Mr. Q.'s expense, which was on the same plan as when the Russian sledge-dogs have a long journey and many days' fast before them, they are allowed to consume several meals in one, Mr. Landor, having laughed to his heart's content, unconditionally promised good behavior for the next day.

When, on the following day, we were all assembled at Mrs. Avenel's, that always *tant soit peu* impracticable "half-hour before dinner" was a nervous ordeal for us all; for though Mr. Landor had greeted poor Mr. Q. with perfect good breeding, yet upon that personage having, while contemplating a recently finished portrait of the youngest Miss Avenel, delivered himself of one of those little innocuous and incontrovertible truisms which he was in the habit of launching on the stream of conversation — viz: "Ah, very lovely indeed! Very like — there is the smile; but *where* is the voice? Ah, if we could only make it speak!" — I, to my horror, perceived the twitching of Mr. Landor's mouth, which was a sort of muscular shock that always preceded one of his risible earthquakes.

But he saw I was looking at him, so he commuted it into a bland smile, and, with a courteous bow to the Poet Q., as if he had been paying him some well-termed compliment, said, "Ah, Mr. Q., *you*, indeed, *may* be able to command as a permanent institution, even in effigy, a

* Mr. Landor would have it that Mr. Q. was guileless of both Latin and Greek; and so used to perfectly lard him with epigrams and ridicule in those languages, which he, no doubt, not perfectly hearing, from Mr. Landor's electric-telegraph enunciation, used certainly to bow to as compliments, from the bland smile and courtly salute with which his tormentor uttered them. Alas, poor Poet Q.! he is now no more!

Dulce ridement Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.

But it is not given to us ordinary mortals to do so."

"Ah, true, so very true!" said the Poet Q., shutting his eyes and shaking his head solemnly. This nearly proved fatal to us all, but more especially to the incorrigible cause of it: so, coming to the rescue, and at the same time contriving to enter a protest against this breach of the over-night's treaty, I turned to him and said, —

"Pray, Mr. Landor, did I show you the extraordinary new muzzle I have had made, quite on a new plan, for Bijou?"

"Ah, poor dog," said he, bursting into one of his usual roars, which must have been an immense relief to him, "if you muzzle him you'll only give him time to brew more mischief, and he'll bark double tides and play the very devil when he's unmuzzled."

"I'm afraid so," I rejoined, "for some dogs, like some persons, are incorrigible."

Here, to my great relief, dinner was announced. On reaching the dining-room Mrs. Avenel said to him, with a meaning look, —

"Mr. Landor, will you have the goodness to take my brother's place at the foot of the table, and keep us all in order?" Which, being interpreted, meant "keep yourself in order."

"A new and charming order; the order of the *Belle Donne*. What is to be the motto of it?"

"*Bonâ fide*," said I, with another meaning look at him.

"Amen, then!" and he ate his soup and remained silent for a few minutes; for he did with his dinner always as the Irishman did with his sleeping, paid *attention* to it.

The Poet Q. having expressed a little mild admiration at the noble conduct of a friend known to us all, who had saved a poor gentleman (an utter stranger to him) from prison by having anonymously sent him a thousand pounds —

"A fine fellow, truly," said Mr. Landor; "but I don't suppose he'll have many imitators, as we moderns, as to fine sentiments and fine actions, seem to have adopted Virgil's advice as to farms; that is, always to admire large farms, but only to cultivate small ones."

Those were the days when dinners were first put on the table and then handed round, and when people asked each other to drink wine; both of which now abolished customs gave Mr. Landor the opportunity of being *aux petits soins* to Mr.

Q., till he so overdid his *empressement* that I could not help saying to him, when the Poet Q. was engaged talking to Rose Avenel, that he was dreadfully overdoing it, as *les extrêmes se touchent*, and the whole thing strongly reminded one of that memorable dinner at Dilly's the publisher's, to which Boswell had diplomatized Dr. Johnson into meeting Wilkes, and where the latter overthrew all the great lexicographer's prejudices and won his heart with no other *deus ex machinâ* than roast veal, the squeeze of a Seville orange, and the recommendation of melted butter.

"Ha, ha, ha! As I'm compared to Wilkes, may I take the Wilkes and liberty of asking you to take wine, Mr. Q.? And allow me to recommend to your notice this *ris de veau aux cervelles*; though offering you brains, Mr. Q., is like offering Hippocrene to Helicon!"

In short, so completely did poor Mr. Q.'s innocence and good faith receive all Mr. Landor's base coin for sterling, that he at last actually began to speak of his own poetry; it was *à propos* of the exquisite beauty of Tennyson's versification.

"Sometimes, do you know," said Mr. Q., "I have qualms and fear that my friends flatter me, for, compared with Tennyson's, my versification does not always, as it were, run smoothly."

"Oh, Mr. Q., discard all such doubts; for, as Erasmus says — and one would really think he had said it of your verses — *Bene currunt, sed extra viam!*"

"Ah, you are too good! I'm sure I feel greatly flattered, Mr. Landor — greatly so indeed!"

But, as we all thought, this was *too bad*. We made it our signal for departure, not without fear and trembling as to what might happen when we were gone, and no longer there to hold the phantom muzzle, like Macbeth's phantom dagger, before Mr. Landor's eyes, and with only his other butt, Fred Avenel, there as an incentive.

"Mr. Landor really is *too bad*, and how Mr. Q. does not see through it I cannot conceive," said Mrs. Avenel, as she seated herself on the sofa, when we reached the drawing-room.

"The fact is," I replied, "that we all laugh so much at Mr. Landor's *laugh*, and his big bow-wow manner, that I suppose Mr. Q. confounds cause with effect, and thinks the laugh is against Mr. Landor."

We had not enjoyed our halcyon quiet half an hour when we were startled by a violent uproar in the dining-room under-

neath: first, a heavy but unequal thud or pounding, such as paviors make at their work; then a great babel of voices — Mr. Q.'s weak treble, Fred Avenel's shrill falsetto, both merged in the thunders of

Bæotian, deep-mouthed Savage Landor,

but all talking, or rather vociferating, together.

"Good heavens! what can they be doing?" asked Mrs. Avenel, turning quite pale. "I fear they are quarrelling; and Fred is so ill-tempered, he'll only make matters worse. We had better go down."

So down we went, the uproar increasing to a perfect tempest as we came nearer to it. Gently and noiselessly we opened the dining-room door, and the scene that was there presented baffles description; and, unless the reader was previously acquainted with the physique and idiosyncrasies of each of the three *dramatis personæ*, it could not, by the medium of mere language, however polyglot, be adequately conveyed to his imagination. *Primus*, they had all three the right leg of their trousers rolled up above the knee; and the thudding or pounding we had heard was occasioned by their hopping round the room on their left leg, while the right one was extended by each of the respective owners for exhibition and competition; while each, at the top of his voice, was insisting that his own individual leg was the most symmetrical and perfect!

Upon our entry Hamlet, *alias* Fred Avenel, *avait la parole*, as they say in the Chamber of Deputies. His face, usually so pale, was all ablaze with excitement, and the importance of the question, as he squeaked and hissed out, —

"Why, of *course* my leg is the handsomest, or how could I play Hamlet?"

"Not with your *head*, Fred, decidedly; so it must be with your leg."

"Very good, very good indeed, Mr. Landor," pensively smiled the Poet Q., as he held his own asparagus-like leg in abeyance.

"But your leg is too thick, Mr. Landor," hissed Fred, returning to the charge.

"Too *thick!*" roared the "deep-mouthed." "My dear Fred, if you can't play Hamlet with your head, you should at least not make it the standard for other people's legs. When I was last at Florence there was a man in the Casa Filicaja, one Giuseppe Baldi, said to have the most *wonderfully* beautiful leg in all Italy. I went with Bartaloni the sculptor one day to compare my leg with his; and upon measurement it was found to be

exact in all its proportions to that of Baldi."

"I wonder," said I, to conceal the titering of the young ladies at this, "that as you were in the house of Filicaja, you did not take his advice."

"Ah, but though poets may be good judges of feet, I don't consider that they are any of legs," roared the "deep-mouthed."

"There, Mr. Q.," said I, glad to pay the poor man a left-handed compliment, "*that* puts you completely out of court."

"Besides," squeaked Fred, who was determined not to give his enemies or rivals any quarter, "though your legs are such spindles, Mr. Q., yet your ankles are as thick as any part of them."

"Well hit, Fred!" roared Mr. Landor. "You remember the old epigram:—

'Harry, I cannot think,' said Dick,
'What makes my ankles look so thick!'
'You do not recollect,' quoth Harry,
'How great a calf they have to carry!'

Fortunately he said this with such extra velocity, snapping with his upper teeth his under lip, so as not to let the words roll over, that I do not think Mr. Q. heard, or at least had time to digest, the pith of it, when Mr. Landor, turning to me, said,

"Now, come, let us all place our legs in a row, and you shall be umpire."

"Thank you for the honor," I said, looking at the dessert; "*mais il n'y a pas de quoi*, for there are no apples, only peaches; and I'll promise not to peach about this truly ridiculous comedieta. We have long heard of 'Every man his own washerwoman;' but we are indebted to you gentlemen for letting us know that every man can be *his own judgment of Paris!*"

From The Saturday Review.
RUDDER GRANGE.*

AMERICAN novelists have been apt in these days, as we have of late had occasion to observe, to overdo the "analysis" business; the beating out of character (and pretty thin character at that, to borrow an American expression), with an affectation of profound knowledge of it from the inside, to the exclusion of free and pleasant observation of incident and character combined, from the outside. American writers of fiction who by certain

works of theirs have gained full and well-deserved recognition on our side of the water as well as theirs, have pushed this dry and empty method to the verge of weariness, and perhaps their position has not been improved by indiscreetly contemptuous utterances concerning masters of fiction yet greater than they can pretend to be. These things being so, it is the more pleasant to come upon an American novelist whose style is easy, fluent, and pleasant, who has a keen eye for humor which makes no pretence at "subtlety," and which hardly ever leans to caricature, who can make his characters show themselves as living men and women without any wearisome insistence on or explanation of their characteristics on his own part; and who has produced in the novel of which we now speak a work which is as charming as Henrik Scharling's "Nöddebo Parsonage," and which is cast in much the same mould as that delightful book, although it may be assumed that the resemblance is undesigned. Mr. Stockton, has, we believe, been recognized for some little time as an excellent writer of fiction in America; but it is comparatively lately that he has been known in England by the publication of any complete work of his, though no doubt many of our readers are acquainted with detached pieces of his work through the circulation in England of the *Century* magazine. Amongst the best of these is the finely touched and finely described story of "The Lady and the Tiger," a story left without an end with far better reason than can be put forward by other American writers who choose to leave their more pretentious stories unfinished, and possibly think that, having done so, they have written like Mérimée or like Tourgénéieff. "Rudder Grange" is, however, a complete story, or a complete set of chapters in several people's lives, though there is no reason why it should not be continued, as Scharling's "Nöddebo Parsonage" was continued in "Nicolai's Marriage."

"Rudder Grange" takes its name from the fact that a young couple, described at the opening of the book as "Euphemia and I," marry upon the smallest of means, have the greatest difficulty in finding a decent house to which they can fit their resources; fall in love with a canal-boat imbedded in the ground by the riverside, which an oyster-man has turned into a habitation; and finally seize the chance of getting such a habitation for themselves. The humor of their difficulty in finding a

* *Rudder Grange*. By Frank R. Stockton. Edinburgh: D. Douglas. 1883.

house at starting — and this is a difficulty which will appeal to a large number of readers — is increased by the fact that before their marriage the two young people have written a little book, which has been successful, concerning houses and housekeeping. When the matter comes to a practical test, they find that the little book is not altogether trustworthy. There is a good deal of fun of a pleasant and not overcharged kind about the first instalment of the young couple in Rudder Grange, as the home in the canal-boat is christened, and this is increased when, to eke out their means, they take in a boarder. As to this they had no trouble, for "we had a friend, a young man who was engaged in the flour business, who was very anxious to come and live with us. He had been to see us two or three times, and had expressed himself charmed with our household arrangements." This is, so far, very well; but the boarder turns out to be "very fond of telling us what we ought to do. He suggested more improvements in the first three days of his sojourn than I had thought of since we commenced housekeeping. And what made the matter worse, his suggestions were generally very good ones. Had it been otherwise I might have borne his remarks more complacently; but to be continually told what you ought to do, and to know that you ought to do it, is extremely annoying." Amongst other things, the boarder cleverly contrives a flower-garden on deck, and hauls in the anchor to use as a garden-hoe. There is a high tide, and the husband comes back from his work to find that his house has vanished. He rushes wildly along the bank, questioning every one he meets: —

I was rapidly becoming frantic when I met a person who hailed me.

"Hello!" he said, "are you after a canal-boat adrift?"

"Yes," I panted.

"I thought you was," he said. "You looked that way. Well, I can tell you where she is. She's stuck fast in the reeds at the lower end o' Peter's Pint."

"Where's that?" said I.

"Oh, it's about a mile furder up. I seed her a-drifting up with the tide — big flood-tide, to-day — and I thought I'd see somebody after her afore long. Anything aboard?"

Anything!

I could not answer the man. Anything, indeed! I hurried on up the river without a word. Was the boat a wreck? I scarcely dared to think of it. I scarcely dared to think at all.

The man called after me and I stopped. I could but stop, no matter what I might hear.

"Hello, mister," he said, "got any tobacco?"

I walked up to him. I took hold of him by the lapel of his coat. It was a dirty lapel, as I remember even now, but I didn't mind that.

"Look here," said I. "Tell me the truth, I can bear it. Was that vessel wrecked?"

The wretched man looked at me a little queerly. I could not exactly interpret his expression.

"You're sure you kin bear it?" said he.

"Yes," said I, my hand trembling as I held his coat.

"Well then," said he, "it's mor'n I kin," and he jerked his coat out of my hand, and sprang away. When he reached the other side of the road, he turned and shouted at me, as though I had been deaf.

"Do you know what I think?" he yelled. "I think you're a darned lunatic," and with that he went his way.

Finally he discovers the boat, has to make his way at the risk of suffocation through mud and reeds to clamber on board, and finds Euphemia and the boarder playing at chess in sublime unconsciousness. Presently the housework begins to tell too heavily upon Euphemia, and there are strange difficulties about getting a servant, which are overcome by the arrival of a girl named Pomona from a Home. There is one objection to Pomona, which is that she is devoted to penny-dreadful literature, and incapable of reading to herself unless she reads out loud. "As the evenings were often cool, we sat in our dining-room, and the partition between this room and the kitchen seemed to have no influence whatever in arresting sound. So that when I was trying to read or to reflect it was by no means exhilarating to my mind to hear from the next room that — "the lady cels i a now si zed the weep on and all though the boor ly vil ly an re tain ed his vy gor ous hold she drew the blade through his fin gers and hoor ed it far be hind her dryp ping with jore." Before long Pomona, excellent creature though she is, gives rise to serious trouble. In the first place, in consequence of various alarms of burglaries in the immediate neighborhood, Euphemia's husband and the boarder each buy a pistol. Also burglar-alarms are purchased, and a plan of action is settled on in case of an actual attempt at burglary. "At the first sound of the alarm Euphemia and the girl were to lie flat on the floor or get under their beds. Then the boarder and I were to stand back to back, each with pistol in hand, and fire away, revolving on a common centre the while. In this way, by aiming horizontally at about four feet from the

floor, we could rake the premises, and run no risk of shooting each other or the women of the family." One night one of the alarms goes off. The husband immediately takes his revolver out of the drawer, and rushes to wake the boarder, who keeps his pistol under his pillow. "In an instant he was on his feet, his hand grasped my throat, and the cold muzzle of his Derringer pistol was at my forehead. It was an awfully big muzzle, like the mouth of a bottle. I don't know when I lived so long as during the first minute that he held me thus. 'Rascal,' he said, 'do as much as breathe and I'll pull the trigger.' I didn't breathe." When this mistake is cleared up the two men make their way cautiously and pistol in hand to the spot where the alarm has gone off. Then by the light of the moon they see the burglar standing on a chair "leaning out of the window evidently just ready to escape." They agree, instead of shooting, to hoist the rascal into the water. As they are barefooted their approach is unheard. "We reached the chair. Each of us took hold of two of its legs. 'One — two — three!' said the boarder, and together we gave a tremendous lift and shot the wretch out of the window." Then they run up on deck to see what the burglar is about. "Just then our attention was attracted by a voice from the shore. 'Will you please let down the gang-plank?' We looked ashore and there stood Pomona, dripping from every pore. We spoke no words, but lowered the gang-plank. She came aboard. 'Good-night!' said the boarder, and went to bed. 'Pomona!' said I, 'what have you been doing?' 'I was a-lookin' at the moon, sir, when pop! the chair bounced, and out I went.'" It is strangely characteristic of Pomona that two years or more later she refers to the incident in this way: "'I felt mad enough to take her by the feet an' pitch her out, as you an' the boarder,' said Pomona, turning to me, 'histed me out of the canal-boat winder.' This, by the way, was the first intimation we had had that Pomona knew how she came to fall out of that window." This, as has been said, takes place a considerable time after the incident itself, shortly after which the young couple are compelled to leave their strange and picturesque dwelling-place in consequence of Pomona's smartness in cutting a little window in the side of the kitchen to throw things out. One night there is a high tide, the water gets in through this little window, the boat heels over and its occupants escape from it only just in time.

After this, and after various vicissitudes, Euphemia and her husband settle down in the country in a house which they call Rudder Grange, in affectionate remembrance of their home in the canal-boat. Here it is that Pomona rejoins them under somewhat singular circumstances. They have purchased a watchdog which growls at them in the most savage and terrible manner, and of which they stand in great and natural dread. He has been let loose to frighten a supposed tramp, who turns out to be a respectable tradesman, and Euphemia, her husband, and the maid have taken refuge on the top of a shed. To them enters Pomona, who has not been seen for a long time, and she walks up to them, taking no notice of the dog. The dog, upon this, gives up barking and growling, and follows quietly at her heels. "'Do you know, ma'am,' said she to Euphemia, 'that if I had come here yesterday, that dog would have had my life's blood?'" "And why don't he have it to-day?" said Euphemia." What is the answer to this question, and what other things befall the young couple and Pomona, all readers who care for a very bright, original, and amusing story will like to find out for themselves.

From The County Gentleman.
DEER ANTLERS.

WE can trace a regular gradation through the deer kind, ancient and modern — from deer with absolutely no antlers of any sort, through those with mere tiny bosses or dags, to those with fully developed branched headgear like that of the moose and the Scotch red deer. The earliest ancestors of the race had absolutely no horns at all, and at least one existing member of the true deer tribe — the Chinese water deer — still retains this early peculiarity. The reason why one such outlying species should never have attained the stage of producing antlers is clear enough. It lives much in the marshes and pools, where the mode of fighting by butting with the head is not likely to be very much practised, and it has accordingly acquired long, sharp tusks instead of horns, which it uses in the combats with its rivals for the possession of the does. The so-called musk deer, which is really more closely related to the antelopes, shows us the antelope type in a similar stage of arrested development, and is equally provided with long tusks.

Indeed, almost all kinds of deer in which the antlers are small or little evolved tend to supplement them by fighting-teeth. On the other hand, it is the more usual habit of all prairie or forest ruminants to fight one another by butting with the head, and under such circumstances the possession of any protuberance or knob upon the forehead, of whatever sort, would be certain to give the animals which happened to display it a great advantage over their rivals in the annual wager of battle. Hence it happens that three diverse types of headgear have been separately developed in three groups of ruminants. In the giraffes a distinct conical bone, covered with skin and hair, buds out from each side of the brow, and forms a dangerous weapon of offence capable of fracturing the skull of a rival, as happened once during a giraffe fight at the Zoo. In the hollow-horned ruminants, such as antelopes and cow-kind — that is to say, all those sorts which have true horns, as distinguished from antlers — the bony core forms a part of the skull itself, and is coated by a horny covering, which is never shed during the animal's life. And in the deer tribe, which possess antlers instead of horn, the weapons of offence are also bony, but without any coating of horn, and in the final state at least are quite naked. Each of these three distinct types of butting apparatus must have been separately evolved from a primitive hornless ancestor; and each (except that of the now quite unique giraffes) has undergone many subsequent changes and modifications in adaptation to special needs. Some isolated species of the deer, such as the American brockets, have hardly got at all beyond the very first stage in the production of antlers; they have only a pair of small knobs on the forehead, like the simple dags of those young red deer in their first year which the keepers know as brockets. So, again, a Chinese muntjac has little beams hardly an inch long, supplemented by a powerful pair of canine tusks. One stage above this early type in evolution comes the common muntjac of India, well known to sportsmen in the Deccan, with antlers about four inches long, and possessing a single rudimentary brow tine beside the beam. This second stage is reached and passed by the red deer in the second year. Thence we can trace a constant progress, through kinds which have triple branches, like the staggyard, to the very much subdivided antlers of our own red deer, or the still more complex armor of the wapiti and the Barbary deer. Each higher spe-

cies faithfully reproduces from season to season, in its own growth, the various stages through which its ancestors have passed; and we can place side by side a perfect series of corresponding forms in the two modes of development, each year of the red deer or wapiti being paralleled by a close similar adult animal of some other species. It is noteworthy, too, that the fossil order exactly answers to what we should expect it to be in this respect; the earliest deer kind whose remains we know have very simple and rudimentary antlers indeed, and they gradually increase in complexity from the first fossil species till the extinct kinds of the period immediately preceding our own. In April the stags exhibit the first beginnings of the new year's growth. A pair of knobs show themselves about the scar left by the burrs of last autumn's antlers, and the smooth dark velvet that covers them gives hardly any sign of active life. With the warmer weather, however, the knobs have begun to bud more vigorously, and the pulses in the velvet show clearly that the arteries are busy at work building up a bony layer on the new pair of dags. As long as the bone continues to grow, the skin inside the velvet remains warm and richly supplied with blood, for of course the work of depositing the dense material of the antler is carried on by this vital covering, which acts to the core much as the delicate skin of a bone does to the hard mineral mass beneath it. While the work of deposition goes on, the stags are very shy and retiring, keeping out of the way as much as possible, for any injury to the velvet causes them to bleed profusely, and also prevents the due growth of the subjacent antler. As soon as the horns have attained their full growth, however, the arteries in the velvet dry up and the skin becomes reduced to a mere papery covering, which the stag proceeds to rub off against the ground or on the trunks of trees. Once the core of bone alone remains, he begins to toss his head, to seek the hinds, and to do battle for them with his rival stags. On the Scotch hills much harm has been done to the development of antlers by the foolish and unscientific practice of killing off the finest heads, which leaves only the less developed to perpetuate the species, so that our British stags have seldom more than ten or twelve tines; but on the Continent, where nature is allowed to have her own way to a greater extent, stags have been shot with between sixty and seventy branches to their lordly antlers.